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THE VIRGINIA QUARTERLY REVIEW

announces for July:

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Corporations and Natural Rights, *by Charles A. Beard*

Robert Bridges, *by Albert Guérard, Jr.*

The Night the Bucket Fell. *A Story, by Leonard Rapport*

The Artist as Individual, *by Herbert Read*

The Expense of Greatness, *by R. P. Blackmur*

Fathers of Victorianism, *by Ford K. Brown*

The Golden Bough, *by John Peale Bishop*

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

O. W. RIEGEL in his article deals with a problem which is at the center of American foreign policy. Though Robert Lansing's career as Secretary of State is the subject, much of what Mr. Riegel writes is pertinent to our present situation. Mr. Riegel is the author of *Mobilizing for Chaos* and *Crown of Glory*.

CRANE BRINTON studied modern history at Oxford University as Rhodes Scholar from Massachusetts. He is professor of history at Harvard University and is Editor of *The American Oxonian*. In the Autumn issue of *The Southern Review* Mr. Brinton will present a study of H. A. L. Fisher's three-volume *History of Europe*. He is author of *The Political Ideas of the English Romanticists* and *The Jacobins: An Essay in the New History*.

BASIL HENRY LIDDELL HART, who is widely known as a military historian and a critic of military affairs, is the military editor of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. He is the author of numerous works, of both a technical and a general nature, including *The Science of Infantry Tactics, The Remaking of Modern Armies, The Real War, 1914-1918, A History of the World War, Sherman,* and *T. E. Lawrence—in Arabia and After*. His personal friendship with Lawrence, as well as his careful study of Lawrence's military genius, lend a unique value to his present discussion of *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*.

JAMES MCBRIDE DABBS, who teaches at Coker College, South Carolina, has contributed essays to various magazines, including the *Forum* and *Christendom*. His present analysis of the dilemma of Protestantism is refracted through the memories of his boyhood in South Carolina. Mr. Dabbs will lecture on the essay at the University of Colorado this summer.

RURAL SOCIOLOGY

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Rural Sociology is published quarterly by the Section on Rural Sociology of the American Sociological Society. Louisiana State University is its Guarantor.

Contents of the June, 1936, issue:

Forms and Problems of Culture-Integration and Methods of Their Study. By Pitirim A. Sorokin.

The Rural Community in the United States as an Elementary Group. By Dwight Sanderson.

Rural Young People Face Their Own Situation. By E. L. Kirkpatrick and Agnes M. Boynton.

The Annual Rate of Departure of Rural Youths from Their Parental Homes. By C. Horace Hamilton.

The Study of the Life Cycle of Families. By Charles P. Loomis.

Concentration of Rural Relief in Certain Localities in North Carolina. By Gordon W. Blackwell.

Rural Emergency Recreation and Future Rural Social Planning. By Bruce L. Melvin.

Current Bulletins. Edited by Charles P. Loomis.

Book Reviews.

News Notes and Announcements.

Books Received.

Manuscripts, communications for the editors, and business correspondence should be addressed to T. Lynn Smith, Managing Editor, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The subscription price is $2.00 per year; single copies, 50 cents each.

(continued from page v)

JOHN DEWEY, in reviewing Bertrand Russell's last book, discusses the central difficulty which separates his position from that of Lord Russell. Readers of *The Southern Review* will find it of interest to compare Mr. Dewey's statements on the question with those implied by James McBride Dabbs in *Religion Without Poetry.*

GEORGE MILBURN, whose story "The Wish Book" appeared in the Autumn number of *The Southern Review* last year, has published two collections of short stories, *Oklahoma Towns* and *No More Trumpets,* and has held a Guggenheim Fellowship for creative writing. A third volume by Mr. Milburn, entitled *The Wish Book,* will appear this year.

FREDERICK SCRIBNER'S stories have appeared in *The Midland, Manuscript, Esquire* and other magazines. Mr. Scribner, a native of Maine, lives at present in Greenwich, Connecticut, where he teaches in a high school.

THOMAS THOMPSON is a native of Amarillo, Texas. "Good-bye, Old Man" is his first published story.

K. C. SHELBY lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He has previously published stories in various "little" magazines.

BERNADOTTE E. SCHMITT is Editor of *The Journal of Modern History* and Chairman of the History Department at the University of Chicago. He first began his study of modern history at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar from Tennessee. He was a Guggenheim Fellow, 1927-1928. His *England and Germany, 1740-1914* appeared in 1916 and his provocative study, *The Coming of the War, 1914,* appeared in 1930.

FREDERICK LEWIS SCHUMAN, who is a member of the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago, is the author of two authoritative studies on Germany, *Conduct of German Foreign Affairs* and *Nazi Dictatorship: a Study in Social Pathology and the Politics of Fascism.* He is also the author of *International Politics* and *American Policy toward Russia since 1917.*

WORLD AFFAIRS INTERPRETER

Contents of the Summer (1936) issue:

From the Chancellor's Study, *Rufus B. von KleinSmid*
Editorial Foreword, *Willett L. Hardin*
Political Aspects of Reciprocal Trade Agreements, *Paul S. Peirce*
Why Democracy Failed in Central and Eastern Europe, *Heinrich Gomperz*
The Fair Eastern Picture of the Pacific Area, *Adamantios Th. Polyzoides*
The Proposed United States of Europe, *Howard T. Mitchell*
India's Influence on China, *Gobind Bahari Lal*
Germany Within and Without, *Ralph Lutz*
The Neutral's Dilemma, *J. Eugene Harley*
World Affairs Digest, *By the Staff*
World Affairs in America, *By the Staff*
Chronology of World Affairs, *Claude A. Buss*

Book Reviews

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(continued from page vii)

KENNETH BURKE, who contributed a year ago to *The Southern Review* an essay on the poetry of the quarter, attempts here an evaluation of the first collection to be made in America of proletarian literature. Readers of Mr. Burke's present contribution may be interested to relate the judgments on proletarian literature to the more general principles expressed in a somewhat parabolical form in his essay "Antony in Behalf of the Play," which appeared in the Autumn issue of *The Southern Review*. Readers particularly interested in the relation of literature and economics, a topic which has been discussed at some length in earlier issues of this magazine, may regard Mr. Burke's position as elaborated here as an extension of the position he expounds in his recent volume *Permanence and Change*.

PHILIP HORTON reports in his essay, *The Greenberg Manuscript*, a literary discovery of major importance, among the papers of Hart Crane. This manuscript, by an unidentified author, apparently contains the germ of Hart Crane's poetic method. Mr. Horton and the editors of *The Southern Review* will be grateful for any information which might lead to the identification of "S. B. Greenberg."

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL, associate editor of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, has contributed to numerous magazines. The fact that volumes by Æ, Robert Frost, Archibald MacLeish, and T. S. Eliot have appeared in recent months lends a special interest to this account of the poetry of the quarter.

HOWARD BAKER, who is the author of three critical contributions in previous issues of *The Southern Review*, has contributed verse and criticism to many magazines, and has published one novel, *Orange Valley*. He is at present at work on a second novel.

F. CUDWORTH FLINT, who teaches at Dartmouth College, discusses in this issue noteworthy critical volumes of the last several months, among them volumes by two *Southern Review* contributors, R. P. Blackmur and Allen Tate. Mr. Flint reviewed five volumes of poetry from the Alcestis Press in the Winter number.

THE SOUTHERN REVIEW

The Summer (1936) issue begins the second volume of *The Southern Review*. The first volume showed "a competence almost wholly unrivalled at the moment in American magazines," as one reviewer put it—"a quarterly of unquestionable integrity in its editorial and literary aims."

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Literature and Economics, by Allen Tate
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Poetry of the Autumn Quarter, by Cleanth Brooks, Jr.

FICTION

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Silence, by Raymond Dannenbaum
Wm. Crane, by Manson Radford

THE SOUTHERN REVIEW POETRY PRIZE

The Editors of *The Southern Review* announce a prize of two hundred and fifty dollars, plus the usual publication rates, for the best poem or group of poems to be submitted before August 1, 1936. The award is to be announced in the Autumn issue, 1936. The work submitted must fall within the approximate limits of one hundred and fifty and five hundred lines. Manuscripts entered for the award must be unsigned, and must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope and by a signed statement entering them in the contest. The Editors retain the right to publish in *The Southern Review* at the usual rates any poems entered.

The judges for the contest are ALLEN TATE and MARK VAN DOREN.

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Failure to anticipate the demand for the Winter and Spring (1936) numbers of *The Southern Review* has resulted in a shortage in those issues. (The single-copy prices given below do not affect the rates for one-year and two-year subscriptions, which may be entered with any number desired at the regular rates.)

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THE PATTERN OF THE UNNEUTRAL DIPLOMAT: ROBERT LANSING AND THE WORLD WAR

O. W. Riegel

It is a pity that neither Woodrow Wilson nor Robert Lansing is alive today to witness the international wreck and desolation which have developed, in part, as a consequence of the events and circumstances which they helped to produce. Their chapters closed in time to spare them full prescience of the tragic futility of their best labors. Had they lived, they would have seen a world which they tried to make safe for democracy in the grip of a rising tide of absolutism. They would have seen, instead of a world made permanently pacific by a machinery of international government, four continents racked by war or impending war. And, most bitter of all, they would have seen their noblest motives and actions not only analyzed and indicted as causes of world chaos, but actually represented to the public as examples of the horrendous behavior from which a peace-loving America must be protected in the future by mandatory laws.

What, indeed, would Wilson and his Secretary of State have thought of the tide of public hostility to Wilsonian neutrality policies which followed the publication of Walter Millis's *Road to War* and the disclosures of the Nye committee investigating the munitions trade? Neither was able to foresee to what limits public opinion would go in repudiating the premises which, in the Wilsonian era, made involvement in war appear a necessity. Neither could guess that the great basic compulsions of national honor and patriotism, and the sovereign rights of American citizens to trade and travel as freely and safely in time of war as in time of peace

should be mocked by the cynical argument that all wars, including the World War, are commercial and hence do not justify the sacrifice of American lives and property. Wilson went so far as to say, in his St. Louis speech in 1919, that the War, in its inception, was a commercial and industrial war. But he made no such admission as regards America's motives in joining battle. Lansing, in the dignified years of retirement during which he wrote the record of his own participation in the diplomacy of the World War and Peace Conference, gave no indication that he ever doubted the legalistic and idealistic basis of America's rôle during those critical years.

To try to discredit the conduct of statesmen who lived under the influence of different facts and currents of opinion from those of today, and to ridicule men who are no longer alive to defend themselves against their detractors, is, in a sense, a violation of one's sense of common decency. It may also be said that these statesmen were themselves creatures of the tides of events and circumstances which determined the history of their age, and that to hold them personally responsible for lacking the wisdom of students who judge their work in the light of subsequent events and knowledge is to be less than just to their memories. But the psychological equipment of statesmen is a topic of the profoundest importance, and it was never more important than at the present moment, when a wholehearted effort is being made to expose, and establish controls over, all of the factors which may propel the United States from neutrality to belligerency in the event of another world war.

The question is not one of mere derogation of a generation which has done its work and departed. The question is more immediate and practical than that. This generation may have its own Wilsons and Lansings and Walter Pages and Colonel Houses. It is of the utmost interest to know the effect of the temperament of our statesmen upon the conduct of our foreign affairs, and to what extent the prejudices, vanities, and private schemes of our executive and his diplomats may commit the nation to courses of action which may lead to unwanted results. One of the basic conflicts in the discussion of pending neutrality legislation revolves around the question of how much discretionary power in the control of loans and credits, and in trade in munitions and other commodities, shall be granted to the executive branch of the government. The discussion has revealed a pro-

found distrust in some circles of the ability of those who manage our foreign affairs to steer a neutral course. These doubts were expressed with such frankness during the Nye committee investigation that a number of persons, especially Southern Democratic congressmen, were moved to denounce the irreverent slurs made upon Wilson and his aides, and Charles Seymour wrote another book to prove that we got into the World War not because of the ineptness and unneutrality of our statesmen, but because of the criminality of the German U-Boat campaign.

The desire to bind the hands of the administration with mandatory neutrality laws has not been brought about, therefore, merely by an unwillingness to run the danger of appearing unneutral toward one or the other belligerent by changing our neutrality policies after the next war is declared. Of virtually equal importance is the fact that the American form of government, in spite of its theoretical investing of Congress, and especially, the Senate, with supreme responsibility for the conduct of our foreign affairs, actually allows the executive branch considerable liberty for independent action. While less autonomy is granted the executive in the United States than in many foreign countries, the system of separation of powers permits the President and his State Department, by means of "executive agreements," movement of troops and warships, appointment of special diplomatic agents and peace commissioners, emergency decrees authorized when American interests are jeopardized, and similar devices, to commit the country to policies and courses of action from which it is frequently impossible to draw back. Congress, since the World War, has given evidence of increasing jealousy and apprehension of the administration's power of initiative, and has passed a number of arbitration, tariff, and other bills dealing with foreign affairs, in which clauses have been inserted specifically instructing the administration as to what it can and cannot do.

Critical events abroad, threatening the outbreak of another world war within one year, or three years, or five, are responsible for the current quickening of interest in the problem of neutrality. In the search for solutions of the problems of responsible leadership in the conduct of our foreign relations, it is only natural that the strongest light would be thrown on the personalities and actions of the statesmen who guided the country

during the crucial transition from neutrality to belligerency in the World War years. This line of interest is based upon the assumption of a probable analogy between conditions from 1914 to 1917 and conditions which will surround the supposititious next war. It cannot be said that there has been any fundamental change in the organization of our government, in the alignment of political and economic forces, or in the personalities of politicians and statesmen, which would appear to make that analogy unreasonable. It is a probable assumption that most of the forces which exerted an influence for war or for peace from 1914 to 1917 will also be operative in the event of another war, and it is therefore of the highest practical interest to discover how the pacific America of 1914 was transformed into the unpacific nation-in-arms of 1917, and to try to erect controls which will safeguard this country from the pangs of cynicism and remorse which have distressed it ever since American guns helped to make the world safe for democracy in the blood baths of Europe.

It is the force of this analogy which gives such startling and pathetic significance to the War memoirs of Robert Lansing.* In the light of the post-War history of Europe and America, Lansing's record of his work is one of the most ironical books ever written. The man revealed in the memoirs had the highest personal integrity and the most scrupulous regard for the responsibilities of his office. He might indeed be called the very pattern of the able and high-minded public servant. His deep sense of patriotism cannot be questioned. His loyalty to Woodrow Wilson survived many differences of opinion between them. His generous opinion of his President, written after the latter had, in a fit of irritation and illness, dismissed him as if he were a naughty schoolboy, speaks for Lansing's fidelity and largeness of heart. A career man, he won his cabinet post mainly by the merit of his accomplishments in the fields of law and government and not primarily through political influence. His respect for legality amounted almost to an obsession. There was an air of stability about Lansing arising from his reverence for traditions and rules, but the course of events was to show that Lansing's legalism was to achieve results as barren as Wilsonian idealism. The high motives of both men were destined, as post-War history has shown, to ground in futility on the shoals of *realpolitik*.

**War Memoirs of Robert Lansing.* The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis and New York. 1935. $3.50.

How could a man whose respect for lawfulness was as scrupulous as Lansing's become so thoroughly unneutral in his deepest convictions? The basic compulsions of the Lansing temperament are revealed in the first pages of his memoirs. Appointed Counselor of the State Department under Bryan, he became effectively Secretary of State after the resignation of Bryan on June 9, 1915, over the "Lusitania" note. Wilson seems to have selected him for Bryan's post mainly as a technical adviser upon international law, for Wilson, as he told McAdoo, had decided to be his own Secretary of State. But Lansing was not destined to have the entirely passive rôle that Wilson intended. Colonel House reported after his first interview with Lansing that the new Secretary "seems to be energetic and ambitious to make a record." A month after his appointment, on July 11, 1915, Lansing wrote down a memorandum entitled "Consideration and Outline of Policies," which contained the convictions which were to underlie his subsequent conduct. The memorandum showed that Lansing believed without reservation that the fundamental issue of the War was German absolutism (criminality) versus democracy (legality). "I see in the perpetuation of democracy," he wrote, "the only hope of universal peace and progress for the world." He lists no less than eight lines of action which the "neutral" United States should pursue to combat German influence and decrease the chance of German success. Of the controversy which was raging at the time over Great Britain's summary interference with our neutral rights on the sea, he writes briefly and without conviction. He could overlook the high-handed behavior of the Allies toward America. He could overlook, with a curious obliquity of vision, that the presence of Russia, and later, Italy and Roumania, on the side of the Entente, made absolutism scarcely the issue. His mind was made up. All other considerations were reduced to insignificance by the fact that what seemed to him the highest expression of mankind's capacity for intelligence and order, democracy, was threatened by a government which seemed to sacrifice legality for anything that was expedient to win success for its aims at the moment.

Moreover, Lansing was fully convinced as early as the summer of 1915 that the United States would eventually enter the War on the side of the Allies. He was certain that Germany "had no intention of abandoning its lawless methods, whatever civilized nations might think of its conduct."

In the memorandum he wrote, "A triumph for German imperialism *must not be* [*italics his*]." It was the certainty of his conviction that we would go to war with the Allies and the discreet and almost Machiavellian patience with which he bode his time which were the most amazing aspects of Lansing's career. Having dedicated himself to what he believed was right and justice (which included America in the War), he was able to endure the reluctance of Wilson, the antagonism of pacifists, and the tragic bickering with Great Britain over our neutral rights—tragic because the fact of our eventual coöperation with England in the War was so sure. Time after time Lansing compromised with his superior and his associates so that, in the end, his deeper purposes could be served. Bryan resigned rather than compromise his beliefs on the issue of the "Lusitania" note. Lansing would never have done so, because a break over any issue, leading to his resignation, would have destroyed his usefulness in accomplishing the ends to which he had consecrated himself.

His policy of watchful waiting was particularly subtle and deliberate in respect to American public opinion. He recognized the fact that in the Administration, in Congress, and in the public at large, there was a strong feeling against the abandonment of neutrality. In regard to the "Lusitania" note, he wrote, "How much more satisfying it would have been to have denounced the whole wicked business, to have sent Bernstorff home, and to have declared war against the government which was the instigator and defender of the barbarous outrages." The Secretary of State of the people whom Wilson asked to remain neutral "in thought as well as in action" would have had us in the War in June of 1915! But the time was not ripe. "I realized," he wrote in his memorandum, "that the sensible thing to do was to defer action until, by a gradual process of education and enlightenment, the American people had been brought to a full understanding of the design of the German Government to become overlord of the world." Lansing's futile efforts to apply an outworn legalism to a new kind of mass warfare waged with mines, submarines, airplanes, and poison gas were stop-gaps until America would enter the War. Lansing wanted delay, not because he loved neutrality or because he hoped that a formula for peace could be found, but rather to make war all the more certain. To have attempted to obtain a declaration of war against Germany and failed,

he said, "would have been an irreparable disaster to the cause of the Allies. In fact it might have been America's final decision, for it would have discouraged those who were seeking to arouse the people to the true meaning of the war." Strange reading indeed in 1936, that an American Secretary of State should consider as calamitous anything that would assure America's permanent neutrality! The policy of delay was also Wilson's, and it is this fact which makes Wilson appear almost to play into Lansing's hands, for while Wilson urged delay in the hope of restoring peace, Lansing urged it in the hope of assuring war, and the Lansing strategy was to be proved the sounder in the end.

It is not easy to identify the wellsprings of sympathy and prejudice which gave Lansing his peculiarly unneutral concept of neutrality. Through the pages of his memoirs are scattered dozens of passages in which he reveals his emotional hatred for Germany and the Germans as well as his irritation with the American people for requiring a period of "education" before they could see Teutonism as he did. The slow starvation of women and children in Germany by the Allied blockade apparently meant little or nothing to him, but the loss of human life in submarine attacks designed to break that blockade shocked and outraged his nature beyond utterance. He distrusted all diplomats of the Central Powers, although he grudgingly complimented Bernstorff on his intelligence and tact. In 1915 he described Prussians as being without an atom of mercy in their make-up, and by January of 1917, when America was still supposedly neutral, he was joyfully prophecying that "by this time next year Americans will be killing those German barbarians." So deep-seated was his antagonism that in 1927 or 1928, the years of writing the memoirs, he felt a "chill of fear" when he realized that a mere reversal of policy at Berlin in regard to submarine warfare might have changed the whole course of events and not brought us into the War against Germany.

His native sympathies were all on the side of Great Britain. Reading the memoirs, it is easy to see why England should have treated as lacking seriousness the innumerable notes which Lansing sent to London protesting the seizure and detention of ships and cargoes, confiscation of cables and mails, and other British interference with American rights. He admitted that British naval authorities had violated more rules of interna-

tional law than the German, and he thought that the British attitude was sometimes unworthy of British statesmanship, for which he had the utmost admiration, but he was happy that British violations of the law affected American property while German violations affected American lives, because the latter, he thought, were far more serious. There is an illuminating passage in the book in which he reaffirms his conviction that America would eventually enter the War on Britain's side, and that it would not do to insist too much that Great Britain cease certain illegal practices, for our utterances would be cited against us by other neutrals if we, as belligerents, attempted to do the same things. "While our conduct might be illegal," he argued, "it would not be flagrantly inconsistent." He also confessed that all diplomatic discussions with England were deliberately "submerged in verbosity." The purpose of this technique was to prevent our relations with England from ever reaching a critical juncture. It is difficult at times not to escape the impression that Lansing was working for Britain rather than the United States, as, for instance, when he interpreted Wilson's peace note of December, 1916, in such a way as to quiet the resentment between Wilson and the British government. On another occasion he seemed to propose to the British that they enforce their blockade of the Central Powers without giving offence to the United States by coercing another neutral, Holland. The attitude shown in these and other cases led Lord Reading to say, after the War, "that the Allied governments were never forced to recede from their position in any important question owing to American opposition." When war was finally declared, we find Lansing congratulating himself on the mildness of his attitude toward Great Britain during the neutral years, and sitting down on the brow of a hill at Gunston Hall, above the Potomac, to muse on the beauty of the thought that Great Britain and the United States were at last joined in a common cause to defend human liberty.

Of more practical importance than sentiment in involving America in the War was Lansing's complicity in the scheme to enlist American interests on the side of the Allies by means of loans and credits for the purchase of munitions and other war materials. The influence of these commercial commitments upon our unneutral neutrality is now well known, but it was not until the Nye committee made its disclosures last fall that it was fully

realized to what extent these commercial commitments were known and encouraged by the Department of State. Senators Nye and Clark produced a particularly damaging letter from Lansing to Wilson, dated September 6, 1915, in which Lansing strongly urged the abandonment of the Bryan declaration of August 15, 1914, calling loans by American bankers to any foreign nation at war "inconsistent with the true spirit of neutrality." Lansing had endorsed the Bryan declaration, but his views underwent a radical change during the first year of the War. He expressed his reasoning in unambiguous terms.

> If the European countries cannot find means to pay for the excess of goods sold to them over those purchased from them they will have to stop buying, and our present export trade will shrink proportionately. The result would be restriction of outputs, industrial depression, idle capital and idle labor, numerous failures, financial demoralization and general unrest and suffering among the laboring classes.

He thought the practical reasons for discouraging the loans had largely disappeared.

> We have more money than we can use. Popular sympathy has become crystallized in favor of one or another of the belligerents to such an extent that the purchase of bonds would in no way increase the bitterness of partisanship or cause a possible serious situation . . . Can we afford to let a declaration as to our conception of "the true spirit of neutrality" made in the first days of the War stand in the way of our national interests, which seem to be seriously threatened?

Lansing's low opinion of "the true spirit of neutrality" prevailed, for shortly thereafter Morgan & Co. successfully floated the $500,000,000 Anglo-French loan. The effect of these and subsequent loans upon the abandonment of our neutrality is too well known to need repeating here.

A pertinent fact regarding this letter and the general subject of financial commitments is that Lansing makes no mention of them in his memoirs. It is incredible to believe that a man of Lansing's intelligence considered them of slight importance, and one is therefore led to assume that he had other, and more disingenuous, motives for desiring secrecy. He does give us, however, his reasons for allowing a huge trade in munitions with

the Allies during our period of so-called neutrality. To German and other objections that the closing of trade routes to Germany made commerce with Germany's enemies an unneutral act, Lansing replied that the objection was "illogical." His main argument was that nothing in international law prevented a neutral from trading in munitions with belligerents, and cited a number of instances in the past when the United States had done so. Not satisfied that his argument would be totally satisfying to the "pro-Germans," he offered the somewhat implausible excuse that in the event that the United States were attacked by a foreign power, it would be embarrassed by a lack of arms and ammunition, and that the right it claimed for itself (to purchase munitions) could not be denied to others. The extreme one-sidedness of Lansing's policies is seen in the vigilance with which he prevented American vessels from going out to be met or nominally seized by German cruisers for a transshipment of supplies. He called this a "means of evading the spirit of the international rule," and "a direct violation of the neutrality statutes of the United States." At the moment this action was being taken against the "unneutral" trade with German ships, British warships were maintaining guard off Sandy Hook and the eastern end of Long Island; Allied spies, propagandists, and commercial agents were overrunning American cities; and trade with the Allies was booming to an unprecedented volume.

The fact clearly emerges that Lansing, either wittingly or unwittingly, played directly into the hands of the financial and industrial interests of the East, in which class he himself belonged by virtue of his birth, breeding, and associations. Lansing legalism, and Lansing solicitude for the national honor, doubtless represented the rationalizing of those groups whose economic interests were most closely bound up with the Allied cause, and who would stand to lose most by a German victory. It is difficult to credit any other explanation for the peculiar obliqueness of the Lansing vision, which made him believe all the stories of German criminal activity in this country while overlooking the machinations of the English and French, and which made him think that all opponents of intervention were either ignorant or contemptible pro-German rascals like LaFollette, while he viewed his own services to the industrial East as the exercise of the highest form of patriotism in defense of the national honor.

American "self-respect" and "national honor" were his fetishes. Any attempt to guard against submarine incidents by keeping Americans off Allied boats "would have been justly condemned by Americans in general, who were, as they always have been, jealous of their rights on the high seas, and who believed that it would be pusillanimous for our government not to insist that those rights should be respected whatever might be the consequence of such insistence." As late as February of 1917 he was amazed that Wilson should express a willingness to bear criticism and abuse for failing to break with Germany if it was the "wisest thing to do" from the standpoint of the safety and happiness of the American people. Lansing saw only the necessity of preserving our "cherished self-respect." The identification of virtue in Lansing's mind with Western capitalist culture may be seen in a passage on Communist Russians. "For national and personal honor," he said, "for truth and for the individual rights of life, liberty and property they seem to have no regard. How can anyone deal with such people? They are wanting in international virtue."

Lansing's zeal to put American boys in the trenches to defend the national honor led to other activities which could scarcely be called neutral, or even fair to the American people, whom, in theory, he was supposed to represent. What should be said, for instance, of his constant tampering with German diplomatic correspondence and telephonic conversations? What should be said of the ethics of two cabinet members, Lansing and McAdoo, who edited, in the summer of 1915, the pilfered Albert papers, and secretly arranged to have them published in the *World?* Lansing also seems to have suggested that the government's responsibility for publishing the Zimmermann note be disguised, and he expressed great satisfaction with the success of the publication, which transformed popular indifference and pacifism, especially in the West, into demands for war. Still more unpardonable was Lansing's publication of the Luxburg telegrams dealing with submarine attacks on Argentine commerce after Argentina showed an unwillingness to sanction the publication because of the danger of inflaming public opinion and jeopardizing its neutrality.

What should be said of a public servant who kept one eye cocked on American public opinion, and conducted the business of his office not so much to represent all shades of American opinion, as to infect the Ameri-

can people and their congressional representatives with a war spirit? He confesses that several notes were written not so much to settle controversies as to inflame that incomprehensibly sluggish public. There is more than a suggestion of cunning in the passage describing his policies in January of 1916: "It was necessary to analyze American public opinion without prejudice [!] and to determine upon a general course of action which would not abruptly challenge that opinion but would guide it in the right direction. We had to be able to show that everything had been done to avoid war in order to arouse a public demand for war." The same attitude marked his relations with Congress. When Senator Stone, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, referred to German babies dying because Great Britain would not allow us to send them condensed milk, Lansing thought it a "serious matter"—not that German babies were dying, but that Senator Stone was not wholeheartedly supporting his policies.

Yet there is an interesting passage in the memoirs where Lansing expresses a curious contempt for the public and for public opinion. In a letter to Wilson advising belligerency against Germany, he wrote that the action would "remove all charge of weakness of policy and satisfy, I believe, our own people. (This latter advantage is not of great importance but the benefit of popular support is not to be ignored.)" The letter is dated February 2, 1917. By that time the diplomats of the administration were riding high in the saddle, and Lansing could afford to express contempt for that American public whose apathy had so distressed him a year before. By this time Lansing's great work was practically completed. He had, with infinite tact and patience, and without doing anything which could be indicted as treasonable, or unpatriotic (as he saw patriotism), or even selfish, helped to guide the nation along the road to war. There was nothing left then but that unspeakably ecstatic moment on April 2, 1917, when Woodrow Wilson read his war speech to the Congress. "In all my experience there was no incident so thrilling, so intense, so profoundly moving as this point in Mr. Wilson's great address when he asked for war against the German Government."

Robert Lansing will be remembered by the familiar photograph which shows a calm, dignified, intelligent, urbane, white-haired gentleman wearing a high stiff collar, a dark tie neatly set off by a simple pin, a waistcoat

trimmed with white piping, and the black, silk-edged frock coat which is the badge of diplomats and statesmen. He was accustomed to associating gracefully with men of his own kind, with the illustrious, the rich, and the influential. He reveals in the memoirs that he was an inveterate diner-out, and found nothing more diverting to the mind than to sit at a table with an entertaining company of friends. He records that in a period of about one hundred days, he and Mrs. Lansing attended fifty-eight dinners and gave eight.

It may seem ludicrous to paint this very pattern of gentility and conscientious statesmanship as a menace to society, yet the record shows that American peace and neutrality were not safe in his hands. If America is to build a neutrality policy worthy of the name, it must take into account the likelihood that positions of high trust will be occupied by men as sincere and tendentious as Robert Lansing. The Lansing example argues strongly for mandatory neutrality policies. The American system seems to allow too much secrecy as to the basic motives underlying our foreign policies, and offers too many opportunities for leading the country by the nose through the creation of "incidents" and the exploitation of publicity. If the hands of Lansing and Wilson had been tied by congressional orders to keep American citizens and munitions off the seas, would America have been in the War at all?

The question is purely academic. Regardless of the competence or incompetence of statesmen to hold the nation to a neutral and peaceful course, and regardless of the mandatory or discretionary character of our neutrality laws, and regardless even of our concepts of the principles of freedom of the seas and national honor, economic and emotional tides will doubtless, in time of crisis, override the most carefully laid neutrality safeguards legislated in time of peace. The present neutrality laws, representing a compromise between mandatory and discretionary principles, provide too many loopholes for unneutral activities of the government and private citizens to assure permanent peace. Even if a complete embargo were placed upon American export trade and travel, and a system of benefit payments adopted to recompense business for the loss of its normal and war export trade, it is doubtful whether such a stringent policy could resist, over any extended period of time, the pressure of economic groups

seeking the lucrative markets for money and munitions which war would create. Neutrality will never be safeguarded by the passage of laws, no matter how wisely those laws are phrased. It can only be preserved by a human tide, a popular will to peace, a passion for neutrality which will subordinate even the "national honor" to its high purpose.

Within certain limits, the statesmen who are charged with the conduct of our foreign affairs have the power to guide the tides of public opinion. The meaning of Robert Lansing in our time is that no neutrality program is adequate which does not make provision for a rigid examination of the credentials of our statesmen and for exposure of the aims and actions of those statesmen in the glare of a pitiless publicity. For practical reasons, international negotiations must sometimes be conducted in secrecy, but the cause of neutrality might be better served than it is now if the Secretary of State were examined at frequent intervals on the floors of Congress, and if he were prevented from withholding information from Congress or a congressional committee on the grounds that divulging such information would be "against the public interest." Lansing, like many of our career diplomats, was distrustful of interference by the congressional representatives of the people. "Something must be done," he wrote to Wilson during the "Lusitania" controversy, "before Congress assembles or else I am afraid we will have some embarrassing requests for the correspondence." The story of Lansing and Wilson does not prove that the President and his Secretary of State have too much power in the conduct of foreign affairs, but rather that further means must be found to increase their accountability. If, after all the facts have been presented to the nation with a scrupulous regard for the aims of all interests concerned, the public plunges onward into war, the blame must fall upon factors which, perhaps, can never be brought totally under control, as, for instance, the essential unreason and savagery of man. But to do otherwise would be to repudiate the democratic processes by which the American people are supposed to control their own destiny.

WHO OWNS AMERICA?

Crane Brinton

THE AGRARIANS continue their stand in another collection of essays.* It is the old stand, surely no less firm, a bit wider, geographically at least —in this volume it has reached out northward and westward, and even crossed the Atlantic—but still a stand unmistakably in Dixie. Recent years have not diminished the strength or the prestige of the group still known as the Southern Agrarians. Indeed, to an outsider they seem to be more important than ever. Already they have outlasted the New Humanists, from whom they have taken no more than custom readily permits in matters of the mind. They seem to have many of the essential characteristics of the kind of "school" that leaves a mark on intellectual history, that influences men's behavior. They share an enthusiasm for certain political and moral values, they would like to have their fellows so live as to make those values universal, they write, for the most part, persuasively and well, and they are determined collaborators. In other words, they compose one of those thoroughly modern groups of self-conscious political and social reformers—the word *reformer* has unhappy connotations, but *propagandist* has worse ones—whose importance in social processes, though certainly not thoroughly understood, is denied only by the more unintelligent social scientists and by the more unsuccessful Marxists.

This volume is a loosely knit symposium, held together only by the enthusiasm of the contributors for a world of small, independent property-

**Who Owns America? A New Declaration of Independence.* Edited by Hebert Agar and Allen Tate. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, $3.00.

holders, a world freed from the horrors of finance-capitalism. It does not form an integrated pattern, nor present a well-built platform. The editors seem to have left their contributors in a freedom consistently and happily Jeffersonian, a pleasant earnest of the possibilities of an agrarian future. Each of the twenty-one writers has carved out his own stone, and some of them have thrown the chips, and even the stone itself, at the enemy; there has been no effort to fit the stones into an architectural whole.

Mr. David Cushman Coyle, Mr. Lyle H. Lanier, and Mr. John C. Rawe in the first three essays give the book a basis in economic thought. Here will be found the essential economic beliefs of the school: economic inefficiency and social undesirability of universal large-scale production and its accompanying finance-capitalism; economic efficiency and social desirability of a society based on yeoman farming and small, decentralized, locally owned industrial plants. All three of the writers are generally temperate, and point out clearly that the Agrarians wish to keep large-scale production, carefully supervised by the government, where such production is essential to the decencies of modern life. The Agrarians are *not* romantic lovers of unmechanical discomforts and have no wish to return to horse-and-buggy and privy.

Mr. Frank Owsley in "The Foundations of Democracy" and Mr. Richard B. Ransom in "Corporate and Private Persons" write more directly on politics; or rather, they develop the political implications of agrarian economics. Mr. Owsley in a very able essay makes Jefferson *redivivus* an advocate of regionalism and an opponent of the totalitarian state, a view which is at least plausible, and continues the traditional warfare against the name of Hamilton. Mr. Ransom has no trouble in showing that in terms of eighteenth-century political philosophy a corporation is not a natural person, and that Jefferson would not have approved of the courtesy by which a Republican Supreme Court has extended to such predatory and unnatural groups as United States Steel the protection of a Bill of Rights and other amendments intended to protect John Jones, and even Caspar Milquetoast. He concludes with the suggestion that by means of an amendment to the Constitution, a sound and unified policy of federal incorporation be made possible. Indeed, several other suggested constitutional amendments occur in the course of the book; it is good to know

that experience has not made all Southerners shy of the process of amending the Constitution.

The editors themselves conclude this first, and much the most unified, section of the book, Mr. Tate with "Notes on Liberty and Property" and Mr. Agar with a lively and pertinent essay on "But Can it be Done?" Both of them have shown their qualities before, and both are here fully up to form. Both are evidently a bit disturbed by the accusation of impracticality brought against the school. Mr. Tate finds support in Berle and Means, and Mr. Agar in the admirably Aristotelian Swedes of Mr. M. W. Child's *Sweden, the Middle Way*.

Mr. Donald Davidson then discusses the need for political regionalism, basing himself on some of Turner's most penetrating work. He sees clearly that regionalism is in itself, no more than states rights, a guarantee against what he calls regional imperialism, which has been in the past the economic and political supremacy of the Northeast. Mr. Davidson calls, not for revenge, but for a new Federalism which will permit genuine regional folkways and habits to persist. Mr. James Waller, in "America and Foreign Trade," rejects both free trade and self-contained national economy in favor of a plan of combined export subsidy and foreign exchange allocation for the benefit of agricultural products. In "Looking Down the Cotton Row" Mr. George Marion O'Donnell analyzes clearly the present plight of the cotton-grower, and ends with an idyllic picture of the possibilities of diversified small farming in Arkansas. Mr. John Crowe Ransom asks "What Does the South Want?" and replies that, in spite of certain "Virginia and Carolina modernists," the South wants what Mr. Ransom and his fellow Agrarians want. At this point another interrogatory essay, "Whither Europe?" by Mr. Douglas Jerrold, is injected. Mr. Jerrold is much more doctrinaire, and to this reviewer much more annoyingly pontifical, than his American cousins. He does not, for example, attack the evils of finance-capitalism; he calmly announces that finance-capitalism is dead. Europe is apparently safely—or rather, dangerously—on the way to self-sufficiency, liberty, and property.

Though the Agrarians are sometimes accused of sentimentality, and especially of the kind of sentimentality which makes the Old South glow like a rose, the only strikingly wistful bit of writing in *Who Owns Amer-*

ica is Mr. Willis Fisher's "Small Town Middle Westerner." Mr. Fisher apparently no longer inhabits London, Ohio, where his life was once all that might confound Messrs. Lewis and Mencken. But absence makes the pen write more easily and lyrically, and Mr. Fisher has written good sense along with what seems to an outsider such nonsense as the statement that life in London, Ohio, thirty years ago was "a good life; better, I believe, than any other, before or since." Mr. Andrew Lytle and Mr. John Donald Wade write pleasantly about the advantages of the small farm, or in Mr. Lytle's effective phrase, the "livelihood farm." Both of these writers are good examples of the close affiliation between the Agrarians and the various literary schools united in dislike for that strain of materialist optimism in Western thought common to the Encyclopaedists, the Utilitarians, the Comtian positivists, and the Rotary. Mr. Robert Penn Warren takes us refreshingly into another field in "Literature as a Symptom" in which he studies with admirable detachment the more recent regional and proletarian schools of writing in America. One of Mr. Warren's sentences would surely be heresy in schools less consistently devoted than the Agrarian to securing the individual his right to self-expression: "Neither God nor regionalism is a literary problem; nor is social justice."

In the last part, Mr. T. J. Cauley insists that the leisure state is an illusion, and lays the already reasonably quiet ghost of Technocracy; Mr. Henry Clay Evans writes, with more strictly campaign zeal than most of his colleagues, about "Liberty under the Old Deal"; Mrs. Mary Shattuck Fisher contributes a very bitter series of case histories under the title of "The Emancipated Woman"—the one essay in the whole book which, with a few changes at the end, might go into the *New Republic,* or even the *New Masses;* Mr. Cleanth Brooks in "A Plea to the Protestant Churches," though he seems at first sight to be a bit off the main line taken by his colleagues, gets down to the ultimates that lie behind this book with a precision attained by none of the other contributors; and Hilaire Belloc with "The Modern Man" brings up the rear in a position, seen simply as a matter of book-making, unusual for him, but with a content long familiar to his readers and his followers. All in all, a bill of fare by no means dull, though one cannot sensibly deliver oneself of the commonplace about it

that here is something for all appetites. Quite a few people would starve on it—if not previously driven by it into apoplexy.

II

A good deal has been written in the way of unfriendly criticism of the group which has grown out of *I'll Take My Stand,* criticism often quite beside the point, impertinent in the literal sense. There is nothing gained by remarking that the ideas of the Agrarians are unoriginal, derivative, that their intellectual genealogy can be traced backward, through a series of often illegitimate unions, to Aristotle and Plato. As traditionalists, the Agrarians can quite consistently rejoice in their unoriginality. Moreover, as Mr. Brooks makes admirably clear, in so far as they really do believe in the kind of truth they are trying to get at, they must hold that such truth is not to be found by the methods of science—is not, in any important sense, new at all. You may freely jibe at Mr. H. G. Wells when he repeats himself and others, because Mr. Wells believes, or professes to believe, in novelty; but you ought not to jibe at the Agrarians for repeating what they insist isn't new in the least.

Nor is it much more pertinent to complain that most of the Agrarians, though they are not professional economists, write about economics. For one thing, they protest against the kind of extreme specialization, in abstract knowledge as in industrial engineering, which characterizes the modern world. But even if we fail to share this latter view of theirs, we must admit that economics has not yet quite escaped into the serene depths which conceal, or should conceal, mathematics and astrophysics from the layman. Or to take another comparison, the profession of medicine, though in some ways it is still as good comic material as it was for Molière, is one which, on the whole, a sensible layman respects. Even quite open-minded men would expect to have some evidence of professional training and professional competence before entrusting themselves to the care of a physician. Though we need not share the recent excess of contempt bestowed by the public on professional economists, we are none the less quite safe in asserting that economics has not yet raised itself to the position attained by medicine. The layman may still, without seeming absurd even to the devotees of science, have his say about economics. Finally, economics is almost in-

evitably *political economy,* and only in very rare circles in America is it held that politics too is a subject fit only for the discussion of experts, preferably Ph.D.'s in Government.

With a bit more pertinence the critic can ask the question Mr. Agar himself repeats: Can it be done? But here the critic's answer, in the present very uncertain state of the art or science of social prognosis, should be modest and undogmatic. If he rejects the cruder forms of Marxism, he ought not to be unwilling to admit that if enough Americans come to share the sentiments and opinions of the Agrarians, then small property-owning capitalism will supplant finance-capitalism. Surely there is nothing "inevitable"—except in the almost Calvinistic sense of predestination which it has for the Marxist—in the continued expansion of large-scale production? Fascism or communism is for modern America a palpably false dichotomy. The range of social, political, and economic institutions, even under what we call civilization, is very great, and there is no final evidence that the precise nature of such institutions at a given time and place is unaffected by what men feel and think about them.

Two remarks, both, it is hoped, concerned with matters of fact, suggest themselves at this point. First, though history is no longer philosophy teaching by example, it still provides us with a useful fund of experience, with a rough knowledge of how men have felt and thought. Now the Agrarians are trying, above all, to restore a dispossessed yeomanry, to get back to the days when most Americans in agriculture and in industry were their own bosses. Two striking precedents in the history of Western civilization are against them: the failure, marked by the efforts of such superior people as the Gracchi, of both republic and empire to restore the Roman yeomanry and Roman diversified small farming; and the failure, evident since William Cobbett if not since St. Thomas More, to make England, where the now value-charged name originated, again a land of yeomen. Except for the somewhat obscure reforms of Solon in a relatively primitive Athens, we have in the history of the society from which we spring almost no examples of the successful restoration to the independent ownership of small farms of a class which has already been pretty completely deprived of such ownership. Second, a by no means thorough or specialized acquaintance with Americans of varied geographical origins

leads this reviewer to the opinion that at present relatively few Americans share the sentiments and opinions of the Agrarians. Most Americans are not, for instance, shocked by the phenomenon of non-voting stock, at least when the stock continues to pay dividends. Whether the Agrarians can, by persistent eloquence and faithful work of organization, and aided by circumstances, convert enough of their fellows to realize their program seems doubtful. They will certainly have to do more than preach earnestly or write interesting symposia. Of course if there comes the collapse of finance-capitalism which so many of the writers of this book, along with good communists, continue to predict, if non-voting stock ceases quite thoroughly to pay dividends, then the Agrarians may find their work of conversion easier. Yet one suspects that in the sort of social upheaval which any abrupt failure of finance-capitalism would bring with it, less humane, less cultivated, even less sensible leaders would prevail.

For the Agrarians want and preach what the best people have always wanted and preached. At this level, criticism becomes quite hopelessly subjective. One can only note that, in spite of the fact that the same men have managed to value highly the Parthenon and Chartres, Milton and Bauderlaire, Bach and Wagner, the range of what men regard as ethically good is after all pretty slight. Others besides the Agrarians have wanted a society where men are honest, peaceful, industrious, tolerant, self-respecting, healthy, well-fed and housed, happily mated, and contented—but not fatuously so. The traditions of the Agrarians are in the main the traditions which move even their "liberal" opponents. It would be, perhaps, an undue exaggeration of pessimism to suggest that the very quality of their desires is a main obstacle to success in shaping this world to accord with them.

Yet in a sense which he undoubtedly did not mean to convey, Lowell was right about the strange and unsatisfactory position of Right forever on the scaffold, and Wrong forever on the throne. One might suspect that Right would by now have got used to the position, and even begun to enjoy it. There are certain signs that this may perhaps be so, but one hesitates to bring forward this book as proof.

T. E. LAWRENCE: THROUGH HIS OWN EYES AND ANOTHER'S

Liddell Hart

THE PUBLICATION of the *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*,* unabridged save for a very few private comments on individuals still among us, is more than a literary event. It is a necessary service for the purification of legend. No force in the world is so potent as a legend; free from temporal limits, its influence for good far exceeds the power that the wisest of rulers could exert; in experience its capacity for corruption has proved infinitely greater than that of any despot. So fast does legend grow, if seed and soil are propitious, that there is no more mistaken service than the withholding of a man's own evidence from the feeling that haste is indecent, and in the belief that the passage of time will produce a clearer atmosphere. Early publication is a more hopeful step towards purification.

Moreover, it is as fair a perpetuation as friends can achieve. Apart from the intangibles, from that current which has already passed into others by contact, no better memorial can be desired than the story which a man himself has set down—if he has there unveiled his mind instead of merely covering his actions with a varnish. And if a book is not a self-revelation, direct or indirect, of essential attitude it may remain but is not likely to live. Here lies the special value of the *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, a value hitherto denied to the many thousands who have read *Revolt in the Desert*. I would not maintain that the complete book is a complete

*By T. E. Lawrence. New York: Doubleday, Doran. $5.00.

revelation, even at the time when it was written. It was too conscious a pursuit of artistic achievement. No one subsequently was more critical of its "pretensions" than the writer himself; he remarked to me once that through an artificial straining after art, it had missed even being a human document such as Xenophon produced in the *Anabasis*. He also termed it a "depressing" book, without any message. This I would strongly dispute, as I did at that time.

So also was he unjust to himself in the former criticism. It is true the music of the prose sometimes drowns the thought instead of transmitting it more forcibly, and that the maintenance of the chosen method produces an effect of stylization in some passages. But if all blemishes be admitted it is a great work, and a work of great beauty. The more closely one reads it the more one appreciates its manifold excellences, of composition, description, and exposition. Happily, one can add that the production of the new public edition is worthy of it. Its closeness in form to the private edition is a matter for congratulation to all concerned.

As a book to be read, I prefer it to the original—which was a book to be looked at, and locked up. I have often wondered how many of its hundred or two privileged possessors ever read and digested the treasure they had. Apart from those who were primarily collectors—a class who were the very antithesis of Lawrence's spirit, if it befell ironically that he served them—a large proportion were stout-hearted but simple-minded comrades of the War, who were more likely to cherish the memory of the man in the field than to probe into the depths of his mind. For these reasons, I am the more glad that the book is now made available to the public so soon after his passing, since it not only will reach an immensely larger number but promises to find a higher proportion who are likely to appreciate the thought it contains.

For it was this, above all, which disappeared in the hasty abridgement published in 1927 under the title of *Revolt in the Desert*—an abridgement carried out in a couple of evenings, with the aid of two fellow-airmen, by the simple process of slashing out the more intimate passages of self-revelation and experience, and linking the jagged ends loosely together. Even as an account of the campaign, the abridged version was defective, since it omitted the illuminating early chapters which

traced the origins and outbreak of the Arab revolt, and plunged suddenly into the story with Lawrence's arrival at Jidda. It is little wonder that many readers have complained that, much as they enjoyed the description of scenes, they could never pick up the threads of events.

There will be less excuse henceforth for any failure to grasp the historical significance of the campaign, and of Lawrence's part. It is true that the *Seven Pillars* is not a complete picture historically. Account must be taken of the time at which it was written; and "it slurs lots of things," as he remarked, particularly concerning individuals. For so long as they still promised to contribute good work, he was reluctant to lay bare their weaknesses, and ever ready to aid by the emphasis of their good points. Only on himself was he hard, analyzing his own motives ruthlessly. Much of that analysis, so far as it had gone, he embodied in the reflections which are interwoven with his narrative in the *Seven Pillars*. And it is these reflections which, to me at least, form the supreme value of the book.

In his opening disquisition on the Arab may be found, because of kinship of spirit, some critical light on himself.

> The desert Arab found no joy like the joy of voluntarily holding back. He found luxury in abnegation, renunciation, self-restraint. He made nakedness of the mind as sensuous as nakedness of the body. He saved his own soul, perhaps, and without danger, but in hard selfishness.

But there was much more than the Arab in Lawrence, and if the term "selfish" can be justified in application to a man of such overflowing generosity and kindness, and such exacting standards of right, it may be only in the sense that the pursuit of the highest good, by a man capable of seeing where he is going, is "*enlightened* selfishness."

Seeing comes surest by thinking; not that the perception of truth is necessarily attained by the processes of the reason, but that by their exercise the mind may become receptive to the light which is existent, as omnipresent as electricity in the atmosphere, waiting to be taken in. Lawrence, born with a powerful receiving instrument, developed it by such exercise as have few men, if like all such instruments it retained its

individual peculiarities. This is to be seen in the unexpected twists taken by the truth-striking course of his reflections. Thus his view of what men call patriotism:

> With man-instinctive, anything believed by two or three had a miraculous sanction to which individual ease and life might honestly be sacrificed. To man-rational wars of nationality were as much a cheat as religious wars, and nothing was worth fighting for: nor could fighting, the act of fighting, hold any meed of intrinsic virtue. Life was so deliberately private that no circumstances could justify one man in laying violent hands upon another's: though a man's own death was his last free-will, a saving grace and measure of intolerable pain.

This precedes his explanation of the thoughts that grew in him as he pursued his mission.

> We made the Arabs strain on tip-toe to reach our creed, for it led to works, a dangerous country where men might take the deed for the will. My fault, my blindness of leadership (eager to find a quick means to conversion) allowed them this finite image of our end, which properly existed only in unending effort towards unattainable imagined light. Our crowd seeking light in things were like pathetic dogs snuffing round the shank of a lamp-post. It was only myself who valeted the abstract, whose duty took him beyond the shrine.

> Among the Arabs I was the disillusioned, the sceptic, who envied their cheap belief. The unperceived sham looked so well-fitting and becoming a dress for shoddy man. The ignorant, the superficial, the deceived were the happy among us. By our swindle they were glorified. We paid for them our self-respect, and they gained the deepest feeling of their lives. The more we condemned and despised ourselves, the more we could cynically take pride in them, our creatures. It was so easy to over-credit others: so impossible to write down their motives to the level of our own uncharitable truth.

They were our dupes, wholeheartedly fighting the enemy. They blew our intentions like chaff, being not chaff, but the bravest, simplest and merriest of men. Credo quia sum? But did not the being believed by many make for a distorted righteousness? The mounting together of the devoted hopes of years from near-sighted multitudes, might endow even an unwilling idol with Godhead, and strengthen It whenever men prayed silently to Him.

. . . . . .

Upon this text my mind went weaving across its dusty space, amid the sunbeam thoughts and their dancing motes of idea. Then I saw that this preferring the Unknown to the God was a scapegoat idea, which lulled only to a false peace . . . . It might have been heroic to have offered up my own life for a cause in which I could not believe: but it was a theft of souls to make others die in sincerity for my graven image . . . To invent a message, and then with open eye to perish for its self-made image—that was greater.

This led him on, however, to scrutinize the idea of atonement.

A reef on which many came to a shipwreck of estimation was the vanity that our endurance might win redemption, perhaps for all a race. Such false investiture bred a hot though transient satisfaction, in that we felt we had assumed another's pain or experience, his personality. It was triumph, and a mood of enlargement; we had avoided our sultry selves, conquered our geometrical completeness, snatched a momentary "change of mind."

Yet in reality we had borne the vicarious for our own sakes, or at least because it was pointed for our benefit; and could escape from this knowledge only by a make-believe in sense as well as in motive.

The self-immolated victim took for his own the rare gift of sacrifice; and no pride and few pleasures in the world were so joyful, so rich as this choosing voluntarily another's evil perfections. To each opportunity there could be only one vicar, and the snatching

of it robbed the fellows of their due hurt. Their vicar rejoiced, while his brethren were wounded in their manhood. To accept humbly so rich a release was imperfection in them: their gladness at the saving of its cost was sinful in that it made them accessory, part-guilty of inflicting it upon their mediator. His purer part, for the mediator, might have been to stand among the crowd, to watch another win the cleanness of a redeemer's name. By the one road lay self-perfection, by the other self-immolation, and a making perfect of the neighbour.

To endure for another in simplicity gave a sense of greatness. There was nothing loftier than a cross, from which to contemplate the world. The pride and exhilaration of it were beyond conceit. Yet each cross, occupied, robbed the late-comers of all but the poor part of copying: and the meanest of things were those done by example. The virtue of sacrifice lay within the victim's soul.

Honest redemption must have been free and child-minded. When the expiator was conscious of the under-motive and the after-glory of his act, both were wasted on him. So the introspective altruist appropriated a share worthless, indeed harmful, to himself, for had he remained passive his cross might have been granted to an innocent. To rescue simple ones from such evil by paying for them his complicated self would be avaricious in the modern man. He, thought-riddled, could not share their belief in others' discharge through his agony, and they, looking on him without understanding, might feel the shame which was the manly disciples' lot: or might fail to feel it, and incur the double punishment of ignorance.

. . . Complex men who knew how self-sacrifice uplifted the redeemer and cast down the bought, and who held back in this knowledge, might so let a foolish brother take the place of false nobility and its later awakened due of heavier sentence. There seemed no straight walking for us leaders in this crooked lane of conduct, ring within ring of unknown, shamefaced motives cancelling or double-charging their precedents.

There are many other reflections one would wish to quote—on war, on discipline, on freedom, on service, on sex. If space permits only one, this is chosen because it lifts the veil on aspects of him that have caused much perplexity.

> I was very conscious of the bundled powers and entities within me; it was their character which hid. There was my craving to be liked—so strong and nervous that never could I open myself friendly to another. The terror of failure in an effort so important made me shrink from trying; besides there was the standard; for intimacy seemed shameful unless the others could make the perfect reply.
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> There was the craving to be famous; and a horror of being known to like being known. Contempt for my passion for distinction made me refuse every offered honour . . . Self-seeking ambitions visited me, but not to stay, since my critical self would make me fastidiously reject their fruits . . . The hearing other people praised made me despair jealously of myself, for I took it at its face value; whereas, had they spoken ten times as well of me, I would have discounted it to nothing. I was a standing court-martial on myself.

Always he strove for a standard, and in his own eyes fell short. But it was a peak so lofty that few other men could even see it through the mists. Most of those whom posterity labels great are content, with eyes kept down, to pluck the fruits in the valley. In him the man of reflection wrestled long with the man of action, and finally won—to the world's loss or gain? It was due to his capacity for reflection that his action was charged with such power—and also that his career of action stopped so suddenly when the immediate compulsion had passed. To appreciate the significance of the contrast one must follow the course of his career.

"Lawrence of Arabia" he was christened when he burst into fame, and in spite of his own protests the title stayed fast—fixed by its aptness. The most significant territorial titles have not been based on the mere possession of land, but have sprung from the association of a career with a country or place. While it is true that Lawrence's campaigns only touched parts of Arabia, the ripples went far wider. From the time when

opportunity, in the guise of the Arab revolt, came to him in 1916, his purpose was twofold—to relieve Britain's clouded fortunes in the East by creating a new Arab lever in aid of her strategy; to free the Arabs from the Turkish yoke and to give them a fair chance of fulfilling their own aspirations. That dual purpose he brilliantly fulfilled. The ever-extending operations of the Arabs, directed by Lawrence, went far to free the British movements from past stagnation and to paralyze the Turkish. They were a vital factor in the overthrow of the Turkish armies and the British conquest of Palestine. And the tide of the Arab revolt, carried a thousand miles from Mecca to Damascus, ended in the establishment of an Arab state in Syria.

It was overthrown by the French after the War, a breach of faith which Lawrence was powerless to avert, though it weighed on his mind. But in 1921, emerging from his Oxford retreat, he inspired and guided policy to such effect that Feisal, robbed of one kingdom, was given another in Iraq by the British, while his brother was also placed at the head of a new Arab state in Transjordan. After the lapse of centuries the Arabs had again become a factor with which the world, and its politics, must reckon. In the historical sense it is, above all, because of this fresh impact of the Arab upon the European peoples that the man who was the propelling agent is rightly styled "Lawrence of Arabia."

Yet there is a deeper justification—in his own psychology. Territorial titles are most apt when, as here, they express the blend of personality with geography. The desert was in his blood. And he was one with the spirit of the desert. He had been a wanderer from childhood, and was a solitary by heredity. His father's family had been in Ireland for three hundred years; they were Elizabethan settlers who had been given land there by Sir Walter Ralegh, a connection; but they had never intermarried with the Irish, choosing their wives from intruders like themselves or from abroad. His mother was part English and part Scandinavian by parentage, but she was of Island Scottish upbringing and feeling. Love of her had led the father into self-appointed exile and poverty. Thereby "T. E."—as his friends called him, in recognition that his oft-varied surnames did not belong—was born in Wales, beneath the foothills of Snow-

don, on August 15, 1888. He was one of five brothers, of whom the War struck away two.

In his first eight years he sojourned in Scotland, the Isle of Man, Brittany, the Channel Islands, and Hampshire, until he came to rest—but not to find rest—at Oxford. Here he was sent to the Oxford High School, but did not take kindly to the experience. "School," he has told me, "was an irrelevant and time-wasting nuisance, which I hated and contemned." Its formalities confined him, and its gregariousness irked him. So he spent his leisure hours and holidays in solitary pursuits—tracking the course of streams, hunting fragments of Roman and medieval pottery, collecting brass rubbings, exploring cathedrals and castles for their architectural interest.

As a boy he traveled over most of France on his own, becoming as expert in roof-climbing as in photography—both aids to his study of medieval architecture. As an undergraduate—he had gained an exhibition at Jesus College—he tramped on foot through Syria in the heat of the summer, studying the Crusaders' castles and searching for Hittite remains. Thither, through Dr. Hogarth's interest, he returned as an apprentice to archaeology in the years that remained before the War, helped by a senior demyship at Magdalen; when the diggings at Carchemish were closed down, he wandered farther afield, through Mesopotamia, Palestine, Egypt, Asia Minor, and Greece. He traveled with some native companions and paid his way by doing "odd" jobs, camel-driving, harvesting; even, once, coaling ships at Port Said. "My poverty let me learn the masses, from whom the wealthy traveler was cut off by his money and attendants."

By this complete abandonment of the resources as well as of the conventions of civilized life, Lawrence succeeded in becoming more than merely a European visitor to the Arab lands. Helped by an innate freedom from class-consciousness, the "street Arab" by instinct became the "white Arab" by adaptation.

To smooth the process, for the other side, he took to wearing native dress on some of his wanderings. For, as he remarked to me later, "if a few Arabs were to go to Wigan in Arab dress the children would probably throw stones at them." To mix successfully with children, especially

overgrown ones, one must first disarm their conventional prejudices. With his fair hair, clean-shaven face, and skin that turned red instead of brown under the sun, he was apparently the last man to carry off such a guise successfully. Yet there is ample evidence that by the Arabs he was accepted, if not mistaken, for one of themselves. "I could never pass as an Arab—but easily as some other native speaking Arabic."

Perhaps a deeper explanation was his ability to get inside the Arab's skin. It was the more easy for him to do so because he was already permeated with the Arabs' deep-rooted desire for untrammeled freedom, and had no more desire than they had for the material possessions that offer comfort at the price of circumscription. He gained his knowledge of Arab life by sympathetic projection even more than by immersion. And by this faculty he perceived that among them "there were no distinctions traditional or natural, except the unconscious power given a famous sheikh by virtue of his accomplishment; and they taught me that no man could be their leader except he ate the ranks' food, wore their clothes, lived level with them, and yet appeared better in himself." That knowledge, applied, became the secret of his success in handling Arabs.

Perhaps his greatest personal triumph was not in inspiring the Arabs but in impressing his powers as a military leader upon the British regular officers with whom he came in close contact. Nothing is more astonishing than the way these, his seniors, were ready to follow his lead, although several were themselves outstanding men. In part, that influence may be explained by applying to him the words with which Voltaire depicted Marlborough: "He had to a degree above all other generals of his time that calm courage in the midst of tumult, that serenity of soul in danger, which the English call a cool head . . . the greatest gift of nature for command." But there was something more.

The radiance of Lawrence's personality has obscured, even from some who subconsciously responded to it, the deeper power that his knowledge gave him. In this lies the message that his War achievement bears. He was more deeply steeped in knowledge of war than any general. Although at first sight this comment may seem startling, it is essentially a matter of fact. Many certainly knew more about the working of the military machine than Lawrence, but in all else that counted he had the

advantage. His youth helped him. They had spent so many years in rising to command that, naturally, they could not hope to have his intimate experience in using the weapons upon which tactics are based. The machine gun which dominated the battlefields of 1914-1918 was a development since their youth, and the light automatic, scarcely less important in its influence, had only been introduced since the War began. All these he mastered, showing an aptitude rare even in receptive youth, and adding something of his own to their tactical use. Aircraft were another novelty that he came to understand through actual flying experience that no other commander of land forces enjoyed. He also overrode the barriers that in former days had prevented infantry and cavalry soldiers from intruding into the sapper's or gunner's field; thus he added to his equipment an expert grasp of demolition and a working grasp of gunnery.

This first-hand knowledge of the tools of command, if not essential, was at least invaluable. The great commanders of old, when weapons were simple and slow-changing, built up their strategic plans on a personal knowledge of the groundwork, which their successors by force of circumstance lacked. The increasing specialization of warfare has been largely responsible for the sterilization of generalship; it can only be overcome by wide thought and hard work. But of few can we expect the prodigious capacity for both which Lawrence revealed, helped by a remarkable ability to free himself from social distractions.

It was through this in youth that he had acquired his knowledge of history and higher theory of war—I have never known a general who had read as widely. As an undergraduate he traced for himself the sources of the Napoleonic system of warfare at a time when they were unknown to most military students, and when only a few of the more profound Napoleonic students were on the right track. Yet this exploration of military history was merely an offshoot of Lawrence's self-imposed course of reading, which covered most fields of human knowledge. As a youth he thought nothing of reading half through the night, lying on a rug or mattress, a habit that had the convenience of allowing him to go to sleep where he lay. By habit, too, he developed the faculty of "sensing" a subject, as a bee draws in the nectar as it flits from flower to flower. It was always the unexpected, the undiscovered, or the inaccessible sources that

he sought—"Originals and sidelights, not compilations." Thus it did not take him long to cover the realm of military literature.

This historical knowledge, enriched by a general knowledge of many subjects that indirectly concerned war, formed an intellectual equipment such, perhaps, as no other commander of his time possessed. When checked by personal experience it gave him theoretical mastery of war that was also unique, and his personality transmuted this into a practical mastery.

His power of command overcame handicaps such as no famous commander has suffered. He exercised command without being in command. He had to give directions under the disguise of advice. He had to deal not merely with allies, but with a multitude of allies. He had not only to make bricks without straw—but to make a conquering force out of men of straw.

The post-War suggestion that Lawrence "backed the wrong horse" is the most foolishly irrelevant criticism—because it ignores the time factor. Lawrence, indeed, only appeared on the scene after Ibn Sa'ud had suffered temporary eclipse; he had been a junior member of the Intelligence Service in Egypt and was still awaiting formal sanction for his transfer to the new Arab Bureau in Cairo when, in October, 1916, he paid a visit to the Hejaz coast and made a contact with the Arab leaders that led to his returning there shortly after as liaison officer with, and adviser to, Feisal. When he appeared the Sherif of Mecca had been in revolt against the Turks since June and Great Britian was committed to his support—for her own sake. Faced with the actual circumstances of 1916, and the need to ease Britain's awkward situation, Lawrence had no choice but to use the instruments that were at hand, the Sherifian allies who were already actively engaged against the common foe. No one was more conscious of their frailty—for the good reason that he had a closer view than anyone else.

But the facts of the next two years form one of the most astonishing feats in history. The revolt in the Hejaz was triumphantly consolidated and the Turkish occupation reduced to one beleaguered garrison, which eventually fell like a ripe apple. Carried northward by Lawrence "on his own bat," the Arab movement produced a dramatic coup by the capture

of Aqaba. This success was not only an offset to the double British failure before Gaza but removed all danger to the communications of the British army in Palestine—also to the sea communications of the British Empire through the Suez Canal. But the spread, and spreading success, of the revolt did more than cancel debits. A larger number of Turks were now pinned down along the Hejaz railway and south of it than faced the British army.

In the next stage, when the British occupied Jerusalem and Jericho after breaking through the incompletely defended front between Gaza and Beersheba, the Arabs served as a shield to Allenby's flank and a lever on that of the Turks. It began with a northward extension of the railway demolitions, which led the admiring Arabs to christen Lawrence "Destroyer of Engines"; in view of the fact that the Turks had scantier reserves of material than of men, "killing engines" was a more deadly strategy than "killing Turks." The Arabs cut off the supplies which the Turks were drawing from the corn belt east of the Dead Sea. Here Lawrence added a fresh touch of novelty to his strategy by capturing a grain fleet with a detachment of horsemen. This was the sequel to the one "battle" he fought—in January, 1918, at Tafila, where he first arrested and then routed a Turkish counterinvasion. His own mockery of his achievement cannot hide the fact that he here displayed a tactical artistry, based on consummate calculation and *coup d'oeil,* in the purest classical tradition.

By such widespread interference and by the widening ripples of unrest it created, Lawrence helped to distract the Turks' attention during the first half of 1918, when Allenby was drained of troops to repair the losses in France. Further, this "intangible ghost" forbade the enemy to reknit their power of resistance by withdrawing to a rearward line near the Sea of Galilee, and so forestalling Allenby's attack. Liman von Sanders himself confessed that his main reason for giving up the idea was that "we could no longer have stopped the progress of the Arab insurrection in rear of our army."

At last, in September, Allenby was ready to strike. Nearly half the Turkish forces south of Damascus were kept away from the British front by the elusive threats of a few thousand Arabs, directed by Lawrence.

As a result, Allenby, from his army of 250,000 men, was able to concentrate odds of over five to one against the sector chosen for his decisive blow. During the previous month Lawrence wove a web of feints and fictions to pursuade the Turkish command that Allenby's attack was coming east towards Amman instead of north to Galilee. During the final three days of preparation, the Arabs emerged from the desert and cut the railway north, south, and west of Deraa junction, the focal point of the enemy communications. This triple stroke went far to hamstring the Turkish armies just as Allenby was about to jump upon them. The two armies between the Jordan and the Mediterranean coast were swiftly crushed, the flocks of fugitives being rounded up by the British cavalry or pulverized by the British aircraft. Only the Fourth Army, which yet had been the strongest of the three, remained—east of the Jordan. Lawrence, with an Arab detachment, audaciously moved across its line of retreat. It soon degenerated into a footslogging, footsore collection of crumbling units, shrinking hourly under the privations of the march and the pinpricks of the Bedouin. The last large fragment was headed off and destroyed just short of Damascus by the Arabs, who crowned their military achievement by slipping into Damascus ahead of the British.

The arrival in Damascus was the vindication not only of the Arab rising but of the course of Lawrence's thought. It was the culmination not only of a campaign but of a theory of war which he had evolved and applied. It was an inversion of orthodox strategy; one that was born of his early studies, especially of Saxe, but developed by reflection upon the conditions of the Arab campaign. It was designed to turn the weakness of the Arabs into an asset and the very strength of the Turks into a debit by forcing them to spread as widely as possible in order to check a flame of revolt which was extended to wherever they were not, while the Arabs, striking at the materials of which the Turks were short, avoided engagement with the men of whom the Turks had plenty until the Turks were forced to extend too widely. By this strategy the Arabs inflicted the maximum damage with the minimum loss, and so with the maximum encouragement, to themselves. With cheap success their confidence grew and the rebel numbers swelled; with vain chase the Turks grew exhausted and depressed. For the orthodox principle of concentration, Lawrence sub-

stituted dispersion; for battle, he substituted a creeping paralysis produced by an intangible ubiquity. And in this kind of warfare he gave to the old principles of mobility and surprise a new application as well as a heightened power.

The very completeness of this inversion may suggest that it widens the past gulf between regular and irregular warfare. But on reflection one can see that its success turned on new material conditions which are even more marked in modern regular warfare. No civilized nation can maintain itself long without the railway, or maintain war without munitions. What the Arabs did yesterday the air force may do tomorrow, yet more swiftly. Moreover, this new exploitation of the changed "biological" conditions of war may be coupled with a more calculated exploitation of the psychological conditions—to which Lawrence also showed the way. To disarm is more potent than to kill. This fact, by bringing him into relation with the whole of war, gives a new meaning to his exploits in Arabia and Syria. Military history cannot dismiss him as merely a successful leader of irregulars. He is seen to be more than a guerrilla genius; rather does he appear a strategist of genius who had the vision to anticipate the guerrilla trend of the civilized warfare that arises from the growing dependence of nations on industrial resources.

Lawrence himself was fully aware of this application. It had no small influence on the part he played in securing the Air Force its opportunity in the Middle East after the War, and also on his action in joining it himself. The utilization of the air, as he remarked, was "the one big thing left for our generation to do." Other factors, however, prompted the second step. He had a sense of fulfillment, reinforced by a sense of futility. It may be near the truth to say that he enlisted in the Air Force for the same reason that thoughtful men in the Middle Ages entered a monastery. A further impulse was his own awareness that he had strained his balance—as much by the excitement generated in writing his great book, as by his War effort. He had begun this book early in 1919, and was helped to continue it by election to a research fellowship at All Souls. On a journey from London to Oxford he lost the bulk of the manuscript, but, at Hogarth's insistence, renewed and completed the task in a few months, although several more years were spent in perfecting the prose

and production. Then in 1921 he was called to the Colonial Office as Political Adviser on affairs in the Middle East, which were at that time in a dangerous tangle. On completing a year's service, a year which had seen far-reaching arrangements, he felt that the settlement justified his release, upon which he insisted.

A few months later he enlisted in the ranks of the Air Force, taking the name of Ross. The public discovery of his presence there produced a commotion which caused his discharge, whereupon he enlisted in the Tank Corps and formally adopted the name of Shaw. In 1925 his transfer back to the Air Force was arranged, and after a spell at Cranwell, and another in India, he came back to more interesting duty with flying boats, and to an ostensibly humble connection with the Schneider Trophy Race arrangements of 1929. If scrupulously correct in demeanor, in accord with his status as an aircraftman, he found many ways of exerting an influence for the good of the service, without and within.

The earlier years of humdrum service were years of restoration. It was a healthier man, physically and mentally, who took his discharge at the end of February, 1935, a man who looked much less than his forty-six years and radiated an air of contentment, whatever the unease that might lie deeper in one who saw all things too clearly. In the later years of his service his interest revived and his gifts were better utilized. Although still insisting on the lowest rank, he gave invaluable aid in the development of high-speed motorboats for the assistance of seaplanes, and of target-boats for bombing experiments. As his service drew to an end, he insisted that he intended to rusticate in his cottage, but there were moments when he spoke of reëmergence, and once, not long before his death, he even suggested that his neap tide might still lie ahead.

As a youth Lawrence certainly had ambition, an ambition so immense that it embraced the idea of attaining equal greatness in action and in reflection. But experience taught him their incompatibility. Although the range of his travel in the one sphere was the means of carrying him far in the other, his course stopped with a jerk—as if the brakes of reflection had locked the wheels of action. At twenty-six, when he made his plunge into the War, he resolved to become a general and to be knighted by the time he was thirty. But long before this he had shed such desires—as soon,

indeed, as they were within his reach. The ambition that survived was merely for achievement. This in turn lapsed when Damascus was reached. For three days he ruled it: on the fourth he left, driven out by his own perception of the danger to his wisdom, and to the freedom this implies. Ambition was almost the last fetter on his spiritual freedom that needed removal to make release complete.

A whim of nature had sent him into the world apparently devoid of the normal man's appetites. From the competitive instinct also he had always been free; throughout his career he strove only to reach a standard raised in his own mind, not to outreach other men. Thus he eliminated one of the fundamental sources of human friction. More common still, yet more subtle, is the possessive instinct; it was never strong in Lawrence, and he sought to remove its tendrils wherever perceived. This proved difficult even for him. Although, through deficiency or difference of tastes, he succeeded in reducing his material wants to a level which amused even his friends and astonished others, he could not rid himself of all possessions without in some degree sterilizing his spiritual desires—they cropped up in a book, a binding, or a fragment of music. Wisdom itself interferes with freedom. Although he came nearer to complete freedom than any man I have known, he could not attain it. Being incarnate, he must still be tied, even though it was by strands invisible to the normal eye.

The extent of his differences from the normal, accentuated by an impish humor, was often baffling and sometimes exasperating even to friends. But to those who knew him, so far as any could, he was a message of the wisdom that comes along the path of freedom. That message cannot die.

A study of history, past and in the making, seems to suggest that most of mankind's troubles are man-made, and arise from the compound effect of decisions taken without knowledge, ambitions uncontrolled by wisdom, and judgments that lack understanding. Men who are helped to authority by their knowledge continually make decisions on questions beyond their knowledge. Ambition to maintain their authority prohibits them from admitting the limits of their knowledge and calling upon the knowledge that is available in other men. Ambition to extend the bound

of their authority leads them to a frustration of others' opportunity and an interference with others' liberty that, with monotonous persistency, injures themselves or their successors on the rebound. The blend of wisdom with knowledge would restrain men from contributing to this endless cycle of folly.

Lawrence was rare among men of influence in avoiding abuse of the power that his knowledge gave him, in freeing himself from the desires that commonly divert this power into channels harmful to other men's gifts and growth. Understanding was the explanation, the sympathetic understanding of other men and the more critical if less complete understanding of his own nature. The deficiency here was in synthesis rather than in analysis. It was far easier for friends to overlook his faults than for him. Charitable to others, he was hard on himself—too ready to exaggerate the less worthy elements in the mixture.

That acute self-perception and excessively sharp recoil may explain much. The more one came to appreciate his wisdom, the more surprising seemed his failure to free himself from trivial inconsistencies. One wondered that a man so powerful in reason could take refuge in small irrationalities, that a man so truthful was apt to indulge in needless mystification. Inconsistency also marked his attitude to public acclaim. Perhaps one may come near to an explanation thus: he saw its falsity, felt its glow, despised himself for feeling pleasure, found pleasure in abasement, saw falsity in his feeling—circular motion along an endless coil. He had a genuine distaste for publicity, not only, I think, because it was contrary to his sense of values, but because it clashed with his self-veiling tendency. Yet publicity attracted as well as amused him. Also he found momentary pleasure in exercising its attraction. The frankness with which he uncovered many aspects of himself was accompanied by intermittent coyness in concealing others—like a woman hiding her ankles while exposing her bosom. Perhaps in far more than normal measure he was both masculine and feminine.

So powerfully charged with contrasting currents, he had continuous war within him—"reason strong enough to win, but not strong enough to annihilate the vanquished, or refrain from liking them better." Yet there was also a wonderful blend, in the depths below the level of conscious-

ness, so that in the content and in the effect the good vastly predominated. His faults were near the surface, his virtues profound. In contrast to one's experience with others, the deeper one penetrated the more difficult it became to gauge his limits, until one was forced to admit that here was a man bigger in personality and intellect than any other one had known. His greatness can be judged to some extent by his works, if examined, and by the impression he made on others, in close contact.

But it was his fundamental goodness, less expected, which impressed itself still more as acquaintance extended. Such goodness, unlike the near-surface faults, does not lend itself to analysis. But we know it when we feel it. So far as distinction is possible, one may say that his positive virtues embraced an intense kindliness, an unstinted generosity, an essential fairness, a compassion which was the truer for being free from sentimentality, a purity of motive so fine that it vomited at any flavor of impurity, a scrupulousness in honoring any promise even when merely an agent, a thirst for truth, and a high courage that could carry him on when the spirit quailed and the flesh weighed down. Negatively, his goodness lay in subduing the temptations to which his supercharged faculties and senses impelled him.

In that never-ending struggle he suffered sorely. It was easier for others, who felt the outward radiation, to appreciate the predominance of his virtues. He was too conscious of the conflict within. And because of this also, he may have underrated, even while confessing, the pleasure he obtained "between the walls of living." His life had more harmony than his thought. If this was a turmoil, it was traveling in a state of contentment—like a typhoon in the Pacific.

It may have been to the loss of the age he lived in that his sense of futility imposed too strong a check on his activity. But the loss to his age may be far outweighed in time to come if what he contributed to the current of thought—not least by living his ideas—continues its radiation.

RELIGION WITHOUT POETRY

James McBride Dabbs

A VITAL RELIGION is rooted in life; its forms seek to express life's total meaning. To speak of religion *and* life is either to speak inexactly or to imply a formalistic religion. Yet these two terms, taken together, seem to describe all my early experiences, and to divide those experiences into two distinct parts. Two questions naturally arise: First, was my early religion merely formalistic? Second, was my early life unconsciously but really religious?

As I suggest in the opening sentence above, I believe that imagination is essential to religion. Religious forms and lives are expressive, symbolic. It is in the light of this belief that I shall consider the two questions just proposed; and, because actual life is prior to any imaginative synthesis of it, I shall consider the second first.

II

Some phases of life are religiously more significant than others; some occupations tend more than others to direct the imagination abroad and thus to develop that "simple feeling of dependency," which, according to Schleiermacher, is the essence of the religious sense. From the religious point of view, I was fortunate in being reared on the farm. There one is never permitted to forget his dependence upon something beyond himself, more powerful than he, and not understood. However well he may learn to coöperate with nature, he is constantly reminded of a world beyond his control. Farming is therefore religious in that it is an active coöperation

with a mysterious universe. Even the rotation of the earth is significant. Something works through soil and air and brings life into being beneath one's eyes. One may remain largely unconscious of the mystery surrounding him, but he is not permitted to forget his dependence.

Yet this life is also dependent upon the farmer. His crops and animals do not thrive if he is careless. His duties are to life, not to a machine; life fails if they are not fulfilled, and on time. If he doesn't wish to care for a machine, he can stop it; but when he has once permitted life to start, though he can doubtless modify it, he cannot stop it and start it again. It goes its own way, and if he would make use of it he must learn its rhythm and put himself at its disposal. Thus he is involved in the mystery of life, as beneficiary and benefactor; thus his mind is continually led into a world larger than himself, his imagination continually prodded, pricked, or tantalized by far meanings that converge towards him, so clearly in fair seasons, so dubiously in dark.

Farm life is also favorable to religion in being composed of scenes and actions which express in themselves a larger meaning. It is religious in being poetic. Its forms are symbolic, its days bound each to each by natural piety. Most inclusive of these forms is the procession of the seasons, a stately movement, inevitable and quiet.

Composing the poetry of this seasonal procession is the poetry of the separate seasons. They are all poetic, but—for me at least—the poetry of autumn is best. In spring and summer, life overflows through leaf and bough; in winter it has departed, leaving the world bare and stripped, even the air washed clean of haze, which, like a poetic music, had helped transform actuality to art; but in autumn the world is for a moment both perfect and alive. The trees still possess their summer forms but with quiet spirits. "Autumn woods have the melancholy charm of something solid and yet hazy"; they are actual and ideal, the fact and the dream; the dream upon the fact, as in summer the down upon the peach, or in winter the morning glass upon the water.

Related to the formal procession of the seasons and days are the activities of the farm. Nature is the clock, time is organic, the hours are phases of life. The farmer's life takes form from nature; but, whereas nature is most poetic in autumn, farming is most poetic in spring. Further-

more, the poetry of nature is more material, that of man more spiritual, and, as expressive of his faith, more religious. Indeed, if it were not for the living soil he shapes and the living rhythm he expresses, the farmer in spring, dealing altogether in futures, would be altogether religious. For the completed poem of the crops, which he will write with the aid of nature, is still unwritten. But he has the music if not the words, the magic tune, and the soil though bare is alive, the black furrows pregnant with meaning. He is the poet at work. If he follows his plow on foot, he makes one harmony of his will, his body, and the world. Within him are the growing crops, the advancing seasons, human hunger and satisfaction, the rhythm of life itself, with its slow unfolding, from birth, through growth, to death.

It goes without saying that I did not recognize this poetry, this religion, then; but it must also be clear that the continual presence of these living forms, natural and human, stirred my imagination, and thus led me into a larger world. The ideal value of that world we shall consider later. Now we shall turn to the first question: Was my early formal religion merely formalistic?

III

Religion is man's largest language; its expressions carry universal meaning. But to be understood, to be significant, it must speak out of our experience. To what degree did my formal religion express my life, to what degree did it give finer, larger meaning to that already poetic (that is, religious) material? I do not know all that it should have done, but for one thing it should have taken the continual whispered suggestion of my daily life, the material order of nature, and related it to the moral order of man. It should have made the god of our fields the god of our firesides. To what degree did it do this? To what degree was it poetic?

As I recall that early religion, I seem to be recalling poetry. Yet all the past, the deep past, is poetry; poetry because past; remembered forms emptied of passion; pastoral poetry. The question is not: does my early religion seem poetic now? But: was it poetic then?

If detachment is a quality of poetry—and I think it is—it was poetic then, for it was surely detached from life. It is possible, of course, that this was not poetic detachment; we shall have to consider it to be sure. In the Scotch-Irish, Presbyterian farming community of my boyhood, religion

was a day, detached from all others: religion was Sunday. It was another world, existing in the midst of life but separate from it. Temporally, spatially, spiritually, it seems, at first glance, a self-contained existence. A closer examination, however, shows that it had many points of implication with life. This is also true of poetry.

Temporally, religion was Sunday. It was a day of rest and (so we sang) of gladness, but it was a somber and, to me, a negative joy. Religion was primarily the church service, that is, worship; but these hours were rather a relation of man with man than of man with God. A harsh critic might have said that here was religion without God.

Spatially, religion was the church, the church grounds, and the adjoining cemetery. In a remarkable way this world was both bound to our life and detached from it. Standing strongly within its grove of oaks and moss-hung pines, the church looked out on one side upon broad fields and distant dwellings, on the other upon woods that hid nearby a stream and farther within their depths a many-channeled river. Here was indeed a visible symbol of religion, a religious idea poetically embodied: the church looking out upon two worlds, the frank, daily life of man, and the mysterious depths of nature: an observation post upon the frontier of human life. But the builders builded better, I think, than they or their rational preachers knew.

Spiritually, religion was so detached from life as to seem its opposite: a practical, purposive life, a theoretical, self-contained religion. The preachers *explained* the Word of God. It was left for Him to revive the congregation. His will would be done. I don't think the congregation felt any great need of revival; and since the congregation, practically speaking, was the community, there was nobody to be revived; and among a people not poverty-stricken there were few to be aided. We fulfilled man's chief end, "To glorify God and enjoy Him forever," with two exceptions: we did not extend this enjoyment beyond Sunday, accepting perhaps that timeless day as sufficient symbol for eternity; and, though we may have enjoyed Him in soberly enjoying one another, we were chiefly conscious, I think, of enjoying one another.

Apparently poetic in this air of detachment, my early religion seems to have been also poetic in its gracious, leisurely manner. Even on Sunday,

however, the stream of life flowed on, though slowly, its current diffused in broad, placid waters. The farm chores continued, but were performed later and more slowly, with a Sunday—that is, a sort of gentlemanly—air. This gracious leisure was most in evidence at the church. The ministers were scholars and, in spite of their stern theology (which I could not understand and therefore hardly heard), gentlemen. My only uncle, a favorite of mine, kept the small but not unimportant library (his father's gift to the church), and with a characteristic mixture of formality and friendliness wrote in the library record our names and the names of the books we borrowed. He was in the true sense a gentleman of leisure. He ran his plantation as he was able, to the joy of improvident neighbors and, finally, of the loan company; but he was at his best in all human relationships, and I shall never forget the autumn days we walked and hunted together. It was he, among others, who helped to make of my religion a gracious, leisurely affair.

The whole service was leisurely. Preaching was preceded by Sunday school; this was the hour when the men—and occasionally a lucky boy—sat outside on the moss-grown log and discussed in quiet voices and with infrequent low laughter the affairs of life: the weather and the crops, and politics. After preaching, with its forty-five minute sermon, groups of two or three, or entire families, chatted for a while of this and that, until finally all had said good-bye and driven slowly away, leaving the church in sunlight and silence for another week.

Related to this gracious leisure, both as cause and as effect, and apparently another poetic quality, was the simple but definite form, or formality, of this religion. On Sunday, having put on our "Sunday clothes," we went to church. We had no more thought of breaking this custom than a poet has of writing a sonnet of thirteen lines. Once in church and seated in our private, closed pews, we followed the immutable order of service, through a doxology, two prayers, three hymns, a collection, a sermon, and a benediction. This was the law of the Medes and Persians. In addition there were the ordinances of baptism and communion, admission to church membership, and occasional funeral services. There were no marriages that I remember. I don't think it was because people didn't get married in the church, considering it hardly a living place, but because there wasn't any-

body to get married during my boyhood. Baptism, like church attendance, seemed inevitable. Admission to church membership, though the expected thing, was delayed until we understood (they said) what we were doing. As for funerals, they were a necessary, though irregular, part of church life. I didn't know they could be conducted elsewhere.

The standard of language was the King James Version. Here we have an indubitably poetic character of my early formal religion. I made little sense out of the Bible as theology, which was unfortunately what it was supposed to be, but its grand music and poetry, though unconsciously received, were not ineffective. Nor were the dignified tunes of the *American Tune Book,* written before the age of jazz and destined long to outlive it. Nor, finally, were the biblical and prayer-book phrases of which my father wove our family prayers: "Hasten the coming of that day when Thy kingdom shall cover the whole earth as the waters cover the sea"; "Encamp round about this dwelling with the angel of Thy presence and let no harm come near us"; "Give us sweet rest and refreshing sleep, and wake us on the morrow prepared for the duties of the day." Here was poetry and religion, though I did not clearly recognize it then as either.

Thus, upon analysis, my early religion reveals certain apparently poetic characteristics. I must admit, however, that I am not convinced that it was either primarily or even largely poetic. There is within poetry a depth of vitality and meaning that I cannot recall here. It may be objected that I did not find this vital meaning here because, being a child, I did not find it anywhere: life was still largely the "feel" of experience. But even after I had begun to be aware of poetic moments in life—and to this day—I found few of them in these religious forms. They show some of the earmarks of poetry but not its spirit. In order, therefore, to determine the poetic quality of my early religion, we shall have to consider more carefully what we mean by poetic detachment and poetic form.

Poetic detachment is the imaginative detachment of one action from the many others that attach themselves to it in life, in order that through this one action life itself may be revealed. This action becomes a sample of life. Poetic detachment is, in one of its meanings, detachment from active effect. The poet does not direct us toward future action. He uses our experience (the past) to reveal to us life itself, the timeless Now. Poetic detach-

ment is really poetic distance: the withdrawal from life to that point whence the flow of life appears as form.

Now the detachment from life of my early religion was, as to its active effect, closely like poetic detachment. Sunday, like a poem, existed for itself, without regard to particular, immediate results. But whereas the poem's "self" is life, past, present, and future, Sunday's "self" was mainly the intermission of life, the substitution of leisure for labor. The poem is a work of creation; in it the essential quality of life, that past moments have often exposed but never expressed, comes to being. Sunday was non-creative (except re-creatively as all life is in moments of rest). In those hours of leisure, life was recalled, not reformed. It is sobering to consider how we were preparing to spend that eternal sabbath we praised in song.

This sabbath detachment, then, was rather mechanical than spiritual. Life was the weekdays and the farm; religion was Sunday and the church. Life was work; religion was rest. Religion was the other, paler side of life. It is that paleness, probably, that has caused me to think of religion as something different from life. Life in general took its tone from the six days of labor, whose brief, periodic cessation seemed therefore unlifelike. But life flowed on, though with a weakened current. A really spiritual, a poetic, detachment is an imaginative withdrawal from this current to a point whence the stream assumes outline; or, better, it is a withdrawal from the surface of life into its spirit.

Now, poetic form is the outline thus seen, the spirit thus sensed. It is not mechanical, but expressive. Mere form is formalism; and formalism, though it may be fossilized poetry, is not living poetry. My early religion had form, but lacked significant form. It did not interpret life; it only increased it. It was merely another moment. It had the negative value of any form that, not actually denying life, can be accepted naturally as part of life; but it lacked the positive value of the form that expresses life. Its church service (I must except the verbal poetry of its scriptures and songs), in both choice and order of detail, was largely mechanical. Its sermon, the heart of that service, was not heart (imagination, poetry) but brain. Baptism and communion had expressive value, but even they were too bare (informal) and also too infrequent to be deeply effective. Even that air of leisure, present also in poetry, was largely though not entirely, the result

of the mere cessation of labor, and not, as in poetry, of a perfect balance of forces, of form exactly filled with meaning.

If poetry is, as Santayana says, "that subtle fire and inward light which seems at times to shine through the world and to touch the images in our minds with ineffable beauty," my early religion was surely not poetry. Its apparently poetic characteristics were far more apparent than real. Yet there was some poetry there, I think, as there was some religion. To the degree that its forms expressed a devotion to the past they were poetic, and pious. It was also faintly spiritual, devoted to ideal ends. It intended to be more spiritual than it was: its conception of the ideal was far better than its expression of it; its theory of the good life than its image. It lacked imagination. It meant something, vaguely, but what? It was not "another world to live in."

Historically, my early religion was a Protestantism necessarily weary from nearly four centuries of striving to worship with the mind alone. The early Protestants had been passionate about ideas. They really found God —at least as a driving force—in a concept. They were so sure of Him—and of their ability to approach Him without intermediary—that they threw overboard the past and poetry; and out of an intense God-and-me Now projected an apocalyptic future. It is not quite true, for several reasons, to to say that they were "pinnacled dim in the intense inane," but the phrase is at least suggestive. Certainly they left us, their spiritual descendants, in an inane no longer intense. Though they threw away the past, being young they still had, as vital force, the future. With the natural failure of that force, the future also failed, and we were left with the present alone. The past was gone with its poetry, the future with its religion. Theirs was a religion largely devoid of poetry; they left us, at long last, a religion largely devoid of religion. Religion without poetry became religion without religion. By throwing away the past, they denied us even the future. By attempting to live above humanity, they caused us to live beneath it. As Prescott says, the Calvinists turned away from the poetry of the Christian religion, which amounts to saying that they turned away from religion itself.

Nevertheless, as I said, some light of ideality, even some cosmic meaning, still shone from the poor starved body of this religion. It reiterated its precepts of virtue, and so made better citizens of those of us who were

destined for other reasons to be good citizens anyhow; it taught us by example gentleness and neighborliness; and now and again, in some deliberate or chance scene, it lifted us into the eternal. Speaking to us in baptism and burial of the beginning and the end, it yet somehow suggested a timeless world enclosing this earthly scene. It lay in space between farm and forest, man and nature, and the tall windows of its capitol looked out upon gray-bearded trees, to a child's mind too old to be older, and beyond them to the overarching sky. Though the minister's voice went on and on, explaining incomprehensible mysteries, beyond the tall windows was the strange reality of trees and clouds. This, I think, is still a part of my religion.

IV

But these are pictures from that weekday world and take us back into it. We have seen how slight was the ideal relation of my religion to my life, how unpoetic, how unimaginative it was. Its actual relation was almost as slight. The Lord claimed Sunday; the rest of the week was ours. Yet along at least three particular ways Sunday intruded into the week. We may pass swiftly over these ways back into that world, the ideal value of whose unconscious religion we have still to consider. These three ways were the precommunion services, the pastoral visits, and family prayers. It is significant that the first two had somewhat the quality of foreign invasions, not hostile but dangerous, into the world of real life.

Always, on the Saturday before the first Sunday in May and November, services were held preparatory to communion on the following day. Our uneasiness over this intrusion of religion into the week is suggested by our reaction to the sight of negroes plowing in the roadside fields as we drove to and from church: their work seemed a kind of sacrilege. And even after we had returned home and put on our working clothes again, we went about our necessary Saturday afternoon duties with a vague sense of danger.

Sunday also invaded the week upon the occasion of the minister's visits, more properly called pastoral visitations. They were like a cloud passing over the sun; or a cold hand upon the heart; or the advent of a serious illness. I do not mean that they made us unhappy; they only made us feel strange. They always ended with Scripture reading and prayer, with everyone kneeling stiffly by his chair in the hall or sitting room. Sometimes these visitations were startling, and aroused in the hearts of us boys

a tendency to wicked, nervous laughter, as once when the pastor drove up just as Father was having a profane argument with a mule.

Family prayers were, I think, the most solid bridge between my religion and my life, the closest tie between that other-world of Sunday and the real world of the week; they had the kindness of Sunday in the close family circle, the strength of the week in the nearness of food and of the morning and evening pines just beyond the window.

So we have returned to the real world of my childhood, and are now asking ourselves: What was the ideal value of its unconscious religion? What did the seasons with their varied activities teach us? There is no question of the actual, immediate value of those days. They were vital days. Children of parents who found life good, we lived on the earth and by the earth. We awoke to the sun shining across living fields, trod the living soil, and slept to the sound of the wind in the pines. We were a part of nature. Though events might prove nature cruel, inhuman, unjust, they were still in the future. For the present we walked shoulder to shoulder with the god of earth and sky, and the sense of significance thus gained was to accompany us far into life. We were as yet too young, too successful, to realize that some day this god might fail us.

How might he fail us? In being too natural, too detached from human sympathies and ideals. There was indeed one recurrent occasion on which he was momentarily touched with humanity. This was the occasion of the family's Sunday afternoon walk about the farm. It would not have seemed strange if we had paused beneath the oak tree by the well and placed upon a rustic altar some simple offering to Pan. But we had never heard of Pan, and there was no altar. Recalling our mood, however, I think that possibly he might have been nearby, in the quiet Sunday woodland or slouching there in the green corn. For it was a friendly time; even the fields were friendly as they rested. The god would have walked with us then if only we had known him.

Well, perhaps he did, though far off along the distant edges of the fields. We should have been happier if we had let him come nearer, though we should not have made as much cotton and corn. But we were not meant to be happy: we were more puritan than pagan. Having driven the gods far away from the sacred earth, we could treat the fields as we pleased; and,

the gods being no longer there, we pleased to treat them severely: they should bring forth their increase. We said that there was but one God and that He controlled the universe; but to most of us He was a notion. If we could have taken to heart the abstraction—it is very hard to take abstractions to heart—that the universe is a sphere whose center is everywhere, we might have found God even in the fields, though I am afraid He still would have been a cold, thin deity. But we could not do it. He remained a natural force, an abstract law, awe-inspiring perhaps but impersonal. Even on those Sunday afternoons, when He drifted across the fields with a vague human tenderness, it was but a momentary mood. Father had an eye on the crops, an eye on the clouds. We were too puritanical throughout the week to be good pagans even on Sunday. Sabbath rest was cessation from labor, not friendly association with God. God was a working hypothesis; and He worked. But it is a sad thing for a man to have to trust his soul's salvation to a working hypothesis.

This was one basic fault of the real religion of my early life. Though vital, it was too impersonal, too abstract. It lacked the human touch that my formal religion at least retained. Unable to find embodiment in formalism and concept, God had abandoned the church and returned to the fields and woods, His native haunts; but He had returned poorer than when He had left. The Greeks had considered the natural divine only in so far as it was transfigured into the human. We Protestants, bent upon having an absolute god, would deify nature as a whole; and, in place of the familiar god of paganism, we have conceived a mathematical force, an abstract life. My early formal religion lacked divinity; my real religion lacked humanity.

The other basic fault of my real religion, closely related to its impersonality, was its lack of ethical standards. God was a God of natural causes, not of ideal ends. Such an interpretation, however, does give tremendous moral weight to order, and is thereby congenial to modern minds, which find in order heaven's first law. After a boyhood spent beneath nature's steady discipline, one is not apt to think that life consists merely in kicking up the heels.

But the order that nature teaches is primarily physical—moral only in so far as obedience to law itself is moral. Nature does not teach us ideal values, does not teach us justice. That is a human ideal. If my early natural

world had been more unfriendly, it might have made us aware of injustice; and, grown sceptical of nature, we might have discovered in ourselves a god more friendly to human ideals. But nature on the whole was friendly; on the whole we succeeded. Our failures were too infrequent and too remediable to teach us the tragic lesson that human endeavor may fail absolutely.

Like barbarians, we mistook vitality for spiritual life. This natural religion was therefore a fair-weather religion. With the clouding of the skies, our optimism would probably give place to stoicism, which, sustained by the vital energy stored up in days of sunshine, would face the universe for a while with grim endurance. But if the dark days continued too long, we should be forced either into a despair passively or actively immoral, or into Christianity. Given time, this natural religion would destroy itself. What would take its place in my life depended upon the power that my formal, human religion could muster at a pinch.

V

So I passed from boyhood to manhood with two religions: one formal and nominal, the other informal and real; one touched with human kindness, the other instinct with natural force. My formal religion was essentially a human morality, my real religion essentially an unmoral life. My morality therefore lacked power, my religion lacked ideal value. The Church had failed to spiritualize the life I had brought to it, had failed to incorporate in one being the powerful god of the fields and the frail god of the fireside, to persuade Olympian Jove to dwell with my Lares and Penates. It is evident that both my morality and my religion rested upon shaky foundations; that failure would inevitably destroy such a divided spiritual life. When that happened, I might lose my faith in nature though retaining my habit, and temporarily, my ideals; I might throw overboard my ideals and come to terms with nature; or, happily, I might succeed in seeing God as both the beginning and the end of our endeavors.

RELIGION, SCIENCE, AND PHILOSOPHY

John Dewey

MR. BERTRAND RUSSELL begins his important book with the statement that "Science and religion are both aspects of social life."* Few, I suppose, would question this statement as far as religion is concerned. It is often ignored with respect to science. For the latter is currently treated as if it were an abstract intellectual pursuit having at most but accidental and external contacts with social forces and institutions. Yet the historic conflict of religion and science since the sixteenth century, the theme of Mr. Russell's work, cannot be understood save as full heed is given to the proposition Mr. Russell puts at the forefront of his discussion. For, ultimately, the conflict is between two opposed conceptions of the authority by which beliefs are to be formed and regulated, the beliefs in question affecting every phase of life from care of the body to moral endeavor.

The need for authority is a constant need of man. For it is the need for principles that are both stable enough and flexible enough to give direction to the processes of living in its vicissitudes and uncertainties. Libertarians have often weakened their case by the virtual assumption that authority in every form and mode is the great enemy. In making this assumption, they play directly into the hands of those who insist upon the necessity of some external and dogmatic authority, whether ecclesiastical or political or a mixture of both. The underlying problem of recent centuries is the question of whether and how scientific method, which is

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the method of intelligence in experimental action, can provide the authority that earlier centuries sought in fixed dogmas. The conflict of science and religion is one phase of this conflict.

Indeed, the history of man is largely a history of the blind struggles of mankind to satisfy the need for authoritative direction in the conduct of life. It is the story of the places in which men have thought they found the seat of authority. It has been a blind struggle because men did not know what they were after, and in consequence have grasped at whatever the accidents of history and of social conditions have placed in a condition of temporary control. The history is thus one of recurrent disappointments and kaleidoscopic shifts. Until the rise of scientific method, the one constant thing amid all the changes was that the seat of authority was placed outside the patient and cumulative inquiries of intelligence, in some institution from which final principles and rules were supposed to emanate. In its early beginnings, the men who committed themselves to inquiry and experimentation were not aware of the import of what they were doing. They were moved chiefly by avid curiosity and by impatience with the ignorance and confusion they found about them. But in view of the fact that their efforts carried with them an ultimate change in the seat of authority, there is no cause for wonder in the spectacle of the struggle which has gone on in every domain of belief since the seventeenth century. Perhaps the chief cause for surprise is that the struggle has not been even more bitter and that science has won as many victories as it has.

Were it not for the depth and scope of the issue involved, the report which Mr. Russell gives of the conflicts in astronomy, in biology, in medicine, in psychology and morals, would be enormously depressing. For it is largely a record of stupidities that in the light of present knowledge seem incredible and of recurring evidence of inability to learn from past defeats as the conflict moved on from one terrain to another. When the record is viewed as one of the growing development of human intelligence out of an animal-like stage with its predominance of emotional fantasy and brute power, the story is exhilarating rather than depressing. Or, it would be such were it not for a matter which is the unifying motif of Mr. Russell's book. As he says in the early pages of his volume, "The

rise of new religions in Russia and Germany, equipped with new means of missionary activity provided by science, has again put the issue in doubt, as it was at the beginning of the scientific epoch." As he says toward the close, "The threat to intellectual freedom is greater in our day than at any time since 1660; but it does not now come from the Christian Churches. It comes from governments, which, owing to the modern danger of chaos and anarchy, have succeeded to the sacrosanct character formerly belonging to the ecclesiastical authorities." And again, "The newer religions are taking the place of Christianity, and repeating the errors of which Christianity has repented."

This state of affairs is the poignant issue raised by Mr. Russell's book. It is that which I propose to consider. The detailed contents of Mr. Russell's book are accessible to all; his lucidity and felicity of expression are ever the despair of lesser writers and in this volume he has almost surpassed himself. The material in the way of facts is freely drawn from Andrew D. White's monumental *Warfare of Science with Theology* and Lecky's hardly less monumental *History of Rationalism in Europe*. The material, however, is compressed and presented in sharp relief. Each phase of the conflict is made to stand out in clear perspective. It is unnecessary to give a synopsis or a paraphrase. But the issue raised is, in my judgment, the most momentous the world faces at present. By all the signs of the times it is one that is going to grow in intensity and widen in area in the coming years.

The question, as I see it, is twofold. What is the cause of the sudden decline of faith in the method of free, experimental inquiry and of the recrudescence of dogmatic authorities, backed by physical force? The other question is: What has human society to gain from accepting the method of science as authoritative in the beliefs that direct human action —accepting it, that is, not nominally but in operative action? The two questions point different ways. But I do not see how we can tell what science might do for us unless we first have some notion of its seeming eclipse, almost collapse, coming after that time, not so far long ago, when it seemed to be triumphant all along the line. Why is it, then, that after a period of great technical success, the position of science is so subordinate and so precarious over so much of the world? For I see no escape from

either one or other of two alternatives. Either the method of intelligence is perpetually doomed to relative impotence because it is a feeble part of human nature in comparison with habit, emotion, and the impulses of some to power and of others to subjection; or else there are special causes for the present decline in the authority of science.

The historical causes for the decline of science are found in large measure in the fact intimated in an earlier sentence when I spoke of the *technical* successes of science. Mr. Russell justly distinguishes between the scientific temper and the scientific technique. The former is "cautious, tentative, and piecemeal; it does not imagine that it knows the whole truth, or even at its best knowledge is wholly true. It knows that every doctrine needs emendation sooner or later, and that the necessary emendation requires freedom of investigation and freedom of discussion." It starts from observed facts, not with fixed general truths from which particular truths can be deductively derived. It arrives at its general rules through experimental observation of many individual occurrences, and it employs general rules when arrived at as working hypotheses, not as eternal and immutable truths. In the course of time, different hypotheses are sufficiently confirmed by observed facts to become theories, and these theories converge to form a still more extensive generalization. But while theologies, from the most primitive to the most elaborate systems, start from general principles, assured in part by "pure reason" and in part by revelation from ultimate divine authority, scientific generalizations are conclusions and are conclusions that are subject to revision as inquiry proceeds. "Knowledge ceases to be a mental mirror of the universe and becomes a practical tool in the manipulation of matter."

Scientific technique, as distinguished from the scientific temper, is concerned with the methods by which matter is manipulated. It is the source of special technologies, as in the application of electricity to daily life; it is concerned with immediate fruits of a practical kind in a sense in which *practical* has a special and technical meaning—power stations, broadcasting, lighting, the telephone, the ignition system of automobiles. "The practical experts who employ scientific technique, and still more the government and large firms which employ the practical experts, acquire a quite different temper from that of men of science—a temper full

of a sense of limitless power, of arrogant certainty, and of pleasure in manipulation of even human material."

What these facts, which seem to me to be undeniable, show is that, after all, the scientific temper, the method of intelligent experiment, made but little progress even during the period when it was not only winning technical triumphs but was displacing earlier dogmatic beliefs about the heavens, about the human body, about the origin and growth of vegetable and animal forms. Science took effect in modifying beliefs on a multitude of special matters. It displaced beliefs that were fruit of early emotional fancies which by the accidents of history had become embodied in scriptures and incorporated in the structure of the creeds that were to be accepted if the individual soul was to be saved. It also revolutionized, through its technological applications, industry and commerce, affecting the details of daily work, recreation, domestic economy, and comfort. But when the history of the victories of science is examined, its triumphs are found to be confined to these special fields, save for a relatively small group of working men of science.

"Science" in other words is still something that a group of persons, called scientists, do; something they do in laboratories, observatories, and places of special research. It is far from being the temper of mind with which human beings individually and collectively approach the problems that confront them. It is so far from this goal that the surface of the working dispositions of men has hardly been touched. The ground is barely scratched. The prestige of science is due for the most part not to general adoption of its temper of mind but to its material application. The inherent idealism of the scientific temper, for the mass of human beings, is submerged in the use and enjoyment of the material power and material comforts that have resulted from its technical applications.

To a considerable extent this outcome is explicable. In the perspective of history, scientific method is a newcomer on the scene. It is an infant struggling with adults generated and nourished through the long millennia of life on earth. Moreover, it came to men who were for the most part almost starved and made its appeal to them on the basis of the promise of power and ease that it held out.

The rapid development of the material side of scientific technique cannot be understood save as it is viewed in the perspective formed by this background. Appetites that had been choked, desires that had been smothered, were brought into lively action when men began to enjoy the fruits of the inventions made possible by science. The new force of the latter was in direct ratio to men's previous impotence to satisfy their wants. Society in general (and not merely a few persons here and there) exemplifies the situation of the *nouveaux riches*. Most individuals, to be sure, have not enjoyed any large participation in the milk and honey of the promised land. But there are few who have not been affected by the lure science in its technical applications has held out.

What has been said, however, is but the negative aspect of the case. The positive aspect is the essential capture of the technical resources of the new science: first, by industry controlled by finance-capital, and then by political nationalism. The present menace of what Mr. Russell terms the new religions to the temper of science, to its free, tentative, and experimental method and its substitution of working hypotheses for immutable and eternal truths, is after all but the climacteric expression of forces that have been at work all during the period when science was winning its technical and material victories. The bursting into bloom of a new way of thinking and action ever comes as a surprise. For we never know just what we are doing till its critical consequences force themselves upon us. But we may be sure that in spite of the suddenness of the emergence of new forms, their incubating forces have long been operating underground.

This is not the place for a disquisition upon nationalism and economic capitalism. But a reference to a phrase contained in a sentence already quoted from Mr. Russell is decidedly in place. The phrase is "the modern danger of chaos and anarchy." This danger springs from the uncontrolled operation of our economic system on one hand and of our political nationalism on the other. It is a real danger because it is the necessary product of the union of economic and political forces. The peril of anarchy and chaos, which is not a mere threat but a present fact, is a new urgent demand for the manifestation of the principle of authority. Because science was not ready to meet the demand, we have the old appeal

to external dogmatic authority. The appeal is old; it is in accord with the established precedents of history for most of its course. The form of its expression is new and terrific. For it has all the resources of the technical applications of science at its command. The danger of chaos that springs from war, as a product of political nationalism, is met by mobilizing the resources of science to prepare for greater wars. The danger of anarchy and chaos that arises from economic dislocation and insecurity is met by dictatorships that seize control of all the processes of industrial life in the interest of one class or another. Both performances are dependent upon the use of techniques that science has brought into being. Both are dependent upon an exploitation, by means of technical facilities generated by science, of emotion and imagination. The outcome justifies Mr. Russell in calling the movements new religions. They have their established dogmatic creeds, their fixed rites and ceremonies, their central institutional authority, their distinction between the faithful and the unbelievers, with persecution of heretics who do not accept the true faith.

It is this situation which to my mind makes the issue of the social place and work of science so momentous and so urgent. We are in danger lest the only way out that will occur to men, even to us here in this country, will be the lining up of one creed and institution against the other and a consequent new type of religious war. I do not mean that in this country the issue will necessarily take the form of direct conflict between the forces that constitute fascist and communist dictatorships. But chaos and anarchy are with us. And every failure to meet the situation by the use of the patient and experimental method of intelligence means the strengthening of appeal to some form of external and dogmatic authority to bring seeming order out of chaos. The disposition to make war and call it peace did not die out in the age of Tacitus. It has only assumed new forms. There are already among us groups of "intellectuals" who are fostering the external authoritarian doctrine and who are ready to become the official philosophers of the movement.

For the question is one that concerns philosophy as well as science. And at this point I am compelled, reluctantly, to part company with Mr. Russell. The portions of Mr. Russell's exposition that are most definitely philosophical in import are found in his chapters on soul and body,

cosmic purpose, and science and ethics. My divergencies do not concern the conclusion reached as far as they bear upon the traditional conceptions of religion; they have to do with the philosophical conceptions put forth in connection with the discussion. The present essay does not offer the time and place for an excursion into the philosophy of perception, touched upon in the first two of these chapters, and of value, touched upon in the last named, and I should not go into the matter at all if it did not seem to me to have a bearing upon the main issue with which Mr. Russell is so deeply and justly concerned.

The point at issue is concerned with the "privacy" of perception and experience generally, and with the "subjectivity" of value, the two doctrines being intimately connected with one another. Mr. Russell believes that "seeing," perception generally, is a private event and that "each person's experience is private to himself." No two persons can see or remember or experience exactly the same thing; since physical science consists of inferences from what is perceived and remembered "the data of physics, when closely examined, have the same kind of privacy as those of psychology," while it is added that those of psychology may have the same kind of "quasi-publicity" that belongs to those of physics. The reason given by Mr. Russell is that when we say we perceive an object, say, the sun, the object is only a remote cause, and what we perceive is dependent upon the intervening medium and upon certain processes in the body, especially the brain. I am unable to see what this has to do with the privacy of perception or with its "mental" character. The argument would seem to show that perception is a complex objective event taking place in the objective world through the interaction of a variety of conditions. It is more a complex event than that which we call, say, the shining of the sun. But save by carrying over without question the conclusions of traditional dualistic psychology I cannot see how it is different save in the complexity of its conditioning factors. Moreover, its very complexity is the ground of our ability to make certain inference as to the part that different objects, "sun," "medium," and "nervous system," play in its production. As for the arguments that experience is private because no two persons have exactly the same experience, I suppose it is true that exactly the same physical event does not occur twice.

But unless individuality of occurrence is defined in advance to *mean* being private, a purely verbal matter, I do not see how the rich diversity of existence proves its privacy.

As I have said, I should not have engaged in these comments if they did not have a direct bearing upon the question of the social function of science. It is difficult, it seems to be logically impossible, to unite a plea for its authority in determination of the beliefs that hold men together in conjoint action with the doctrine of the inherent privacy of its procedures and conclusions. If the latter doctrine were substantiated, we should have to accept it, whatever its unfortunate social consequences. But if it is not valid and yet is accepted, it tends to strengthen the idea that in a conflict of private views we must have recourse to external authority and force in order to effect a semblance of communal order. The issue involved comes out even more clearly in the case of the nature of value in its connection with morals.

According to Mr. Russell, "Ethics contains no *statements*, whether true or false, but consists of desires of a certain general kind." Disagreement about what is good or bad is, then, of the nature of a difference in tastes. To call something a good or positive value is one way of saying, "I like it," as in another area I may like oysters: to call it bad is not to make an objective statement, but a statement about one's personal and subjective attitude. I do not doubt that ethical theories are often put forth that are in fact elaborate "rationalizations" of private and group likes and dislikes, I do not doubt that a desire is a condition of our being aware that something is a value, and possibly also one causal condition among others of anything's *being* a value. But there is a long road from even the latter position to the doctrine that good *is* identical with that which we like. For likings and desires are natural events. While they have conditions, they are not identical with their causal conditions, and certainly not with one of them in isolation. Mr. Russell says something that is profoundly true when he says that "it is by cultivation of large and generous desires through intelligence, happiness and freedom from fear, that men can be brought to act more than they do at present in a manner that is consistent with the general happiness of mankind." But I doubt whether this statement is consistent with the doctrine of the complete

"subjectivity" of desires and values or whether it means *merely* that Mr. Russell, in common with a few other persons, happens to like "large and generous desires" better than he likes certain other desires. For the argument assumes that desires have objective conditions and objective consequences.

While it is true, as Mr. Russell says in the same passage, that it is not ethical theory which produces the sort of desires that are needed, it is theoretically conceivable that there should be ethical theory that concerns itself scientifically and objectively with the causal conditions and the concrete consequences of this and that desire. The practical difficulties in the way are immense. Only a slight beginning has been made. But were the enterprise pursued, it would develop, as it matures, techniques for dealing with human nature as we now have them for physical nature. These techniques would not consist in manipulation from without because they would demand coöperative voluntary responses for their realization. Such a science and technique are not conspicuous for their absence. To follow this train of thought would, I believe, throw a flood of light upon the existing comparatively slight influence of the scientific temper and the enormous influence of scientific techniques because of the material power, comfort, and ease they afford. It is an oft-told story that physical science is indefinitely advanced beyond the human and moral sciences. Knowledge of the relation of means and consequences with respect to human desires and purposes, comparable to the knowledge we have of physical causes and effects, is the only way in which to bring social knowledge and actions to anything approaching what already exists in physical knowledge and power.

THE ROAD TO CALAMITY

George Milburn

THE VILLAGE choir high up on a hilltop woke them early Easter morning. They had driven late the night before and it made Ern sore as a boil to hear those Christian cornets blatting at the sun. He yoked his head with a pillow and tried to go back to sleep. The iron bed squeaked and jiggled. Sarah was getting up.

The hotel clerk, with the midnight gleam on his rimless eyeglasses, had smiled warmly. "You folks come in for our Easter sunrise service, I pressoom?"

Ern, signing *Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Forepaugh, New York City* on the register, had grunted, "Nope. Just looking for a place to stop. What's your charge for a room and bath?"

"Oh!" the dapper little clerk had said, crestfallen, "I allowed maybe you folks had come in for our Easter sunrise service. We only got one room and bath left. Folks do come for miles around ever year. I can let you have that for two dollars. It's a kind of, you might call it a reg'lar annual event here in the Ozarks, our Easter sunrise service is. We got a hunderd voice choir. And a fine big community orchestra, too. All our churches joins in. I didn't know. I just allowed maybe . . ."

"How interesting!" Sarah had said brightly as his words trailed off. "Why, tomorrow *is* Easter, isn't it! Ernest we must get up in time for their Easter sunrise service."

"Maybe you'd like to take this souvenir program and read it tonight," the clerk had said wistfully, won back by Sarah's smile.

The land of a million smiles. The hills of a trillion thrills. The Ozarks. *Aux Arcs,* meaning "with bows," a term early French trappers used to designate Indian tribes native to this region. Harold Bell Wright immortalized the hill people in his *Shepherd of the Hills*. Modern writers are finding much material and considerable wealth in recording the traits and "tall tales" of early backwoods Ozarkians. So much so, in fact, that travelers through the Ozarks oftentimes expect to see "types" peculiar to the hill country . . . Gentle nudge from the chamber of commerce there. Ha, ha! fooled you-uns. Come seeking types, eh? Wal, we got busy and changed all that, stranger. Caught up with you furriners. We haint no diffrunt from the balance of you-uns now.

Ah yes! So Sarah was running bath water at 5:45 in the morning. Much material and considerable wealth. Ern threw off the dingy quilts and piled out of bed. He padded over to the washbowl, barefooted, in wrinkled cerise pajamas.

"No rest for the wicked!" Sarah sang from the bathroom when she heard the gin gurgling into a hotel tumbler.

"On the contrary," Ern called back, feeling better with a slug of gin under his drawstring, "Christ is risen!"

He stood with his drink at the window, looking out over a jeweled lawn, gaudy in the golden light. Gold in them hills, podner, pyore gold. Harold Bell Wright on his yacht. That Book-of-the-Month Club selection while back, all in Ozark dialect. Modern writers are finding much material and considerable wealth. What won't these modern writers do next? First they bring the privy right into the parlor. Stand it right over there in front of the escritoire-cum-raddio, Mr. Forepaugh. Now they'll go to work and carry it out again. Idea for an article in a writer's trade journal: Does Cess Pool Literature Pay Dividends? The latest researches of Huxley and Hall have disclosed the effectiveness of a wholesome quill. How do you know that *you* can't write? Editors cry for good clean rollicking tales. In current parlance, writing according to the *particularized* needs of a publication is known as *slanting*. So Tucker says to me, Just because you've sold a few stories to the highbrow magazines, Forepaugh, don't start getting delu-

sions of grandeur; you're still a newspaper man. And then I told Tucker he could take and do with his newspaper what the first mate told Captain Sims he could take and do with his fine Havana seegars. Alexander Woollcott: Literary Portent? asks Alan Devoe, contributing editor of *The Writer*. Without wishing to read a larger portent than is actually here, I would ask whether the obvious esteem in which Mr. Woollcott is held—as I write these somewhat incredulous lines, the sales of *While Rome Burns* have just passed the 998,000 mark—may not mean that there has set in a definite reaction against all the literary gore-and-gristle which lately was so popular and that this trend which we see specifically evidenced in the reading public's affection for Woollcott is actually a widespread returning preference for what used to be called Charm . . . End quotes and grab your second fiddles, boys! Follow Nero in status quo says Mr. Devoe. Upsy-daisy! The Go-Climb-a-Parapet Department. Or was it a balcony? Suetonius says the tower of Maecenas. Curious, too; Maecenas, angel to Virgil and Horace. Very name a synonym for a lavish patron of literature. No wonder Tucker's jealous; magazines take all his best men. Mr. Forepaugh, while you were residing in New York City, did you by any chance make the acquaintance of O. O. McIntyre? His colyum mentions so many of our well-known celeebrities.

Two high school boys in ice cream pants came stumping across the rustic bridge. One carried a shiny trombone; the other a black instrument case.

"Take your time, Sarah," Ern said. "The Easter sunrise service has already busted up. I see the bandboys going home to breakfast."

The bathroom door opened and Sarah came out naked to get him to help her with her girdle. "Oh, who cares about the old sunrise service?" she said shortly.

"Then what was the idea of crawling out at this ungodly hour?" he grumbled.

"Why, it's such a glorious morning! Let's just this once get out on the road early. We can have breakfast without hurrying and be started by seven o'clock. The hills will be beautiful. Hadn't we better send your pal Merrick a telegram from here?"

"We'll get there before a telegram would. A telegram wouldn't be delivered on the rural route till tomorrow morning."

"That's what I thought! I *told* you yesterday you'd better send a telegram from St. Louis. How'll Merrick know we're coming?"

"See us drive up, I suppose. It'll be all right. I wrote him last Winter that we might drive out this Spring. Even if he happens to be away, we've got his written invitation to walk right in and make ourselves at home. A telegram 'd just be a waste of money—something that grows on trees of an exceedingly rare species."

"So I've heard you say," Sarah said drily.

The hotel dining room was still crowded with the overflow from the sunrise service. Lady choristers moved about in cheesecloth robes. The men had on their gilt-braided lodge uniforms. Ern saw the mild little hotel clerk looking like Lord Nelson with a plume-crested admiral's hat on his head and a nickled scabbard banging his shins. Breakfast was good with trout crisp from the hotel's own spring branch, real blackberry jam, sweet butter on hot soda biscuits, and even though the coffee was too weak and the eggs were too fresh to taste right, they both ate with more relish than they ever had for their wonted roll and coffee. They waited until they were fastening up the bags to snicker about the costumes.

Then they were out on the road again, sweeping over the blacktop into the hills. Spring water pattered on the car as they skirted high white bluffs. They ran green ridges clouded with pink and white dogwood blossoms and splashed scarlet with redbud. They dipped into dew drenched "hollers," fragrant with hawthorne, shrill with meadow larks and mockers. Sarah kept crying out at the beauty. She drove. Ern sat with his nose stuck in a highway map and at every fork of the road they wrangled about the turn to take. With spiteful accents on the endearments:

"Yes, *darling,* I told you we had to turn off 66 back there."

"But, *sweetheart,* I saw the marker and it pointed this way."

When they came to the town they were headed for, the highway swooped on by the edge and they snapped at each other as Sarah sped past the first sign. She turned off down a rutted street and they jounced up to the courthouse square. Dogs lay sunning themselves in the dust. The wooden curb was lined with ruminant whittlers.

Ern, who had been heedless of natural beauty along the way, began to sit up and take notice of this lazy idyll. "Know what it reminds me of?" he exclaimed to Sarah. "Remember Mark Twain's small towns—the place where Puddinhead Wilson practised law, say? Here it is! Such a town is worth a hundred of your up-and-coming places, all trying to be something they're not, putting on city ways with cast-iron light standards and plate-glass show windows. Look at those honest sash-window store fronts!"

Just then Sunday school let out and the picture changed. An Easter parade of pretty girls in dresses that would have been a credit to Fifth Avenue moved along the drowsy street.

Ern got out at the post office to ask the way. The post office windows were closed for Sunday, but a lank, blue-shaven man stood gazing at a fly-specked air mail map tacked to the wall.

"Could you tell me where Mr. Clive Merrick lives?" Ern asked.

The blue-jawed man scratched his talcumed Adam's apple. "Clive Merrick? Haint he that story-writin' feller?"

"Yes, that's who I mean. He's got a cabin someplace near here, but I don't know just how to go to reach it."

"Why that story-writin' feller's place is out here on the road to Calamity."

" On the road to *where?*"

"Calamity. But you don't go clean to Calamity. Hit's ten mile to Calamity. I tell you how to go: foller this street till you hit the ford. After you cross the branch, bear to your left and you strack the road to Calamity. Hit's the main-traveled road. You caint—"

"Calamity? Is that the name of a town?" Ern asked.

"Why, no, Calamity haint persactly a town. Hit's a store and a saw-mill—jist a wide place in the road, I reckon you'd call it. The star route goes that fur; hit's whur the road ends. But *you* don't—"

"How'd they ever happen to call it Calamity?"

"Wal, sir, mister, now that I caint say. It allus has been called Calamity, fur as I recollect. Aw, I guess I do know why, too! Hit's on a bend of the crik and the crik bend is name Calamity Bend, so I reckon the place is called after Calamity Bend. But to git to whur *you're* goin', you don't go only but about half-way to Calamity. Like I say, after you ford

the branch down here, bear to your left and keep on bearin' and that heads you west on the road to Calamity. You caint miss hit. Out here about four mile, or nigher five, maybe—that story-writin' feller's place, you'll see the house from the rise. Hit's a small-sized house built out of stone with a big farplace chimney. You caint miss—"

"On the road to Calamity, hey?" Ern said.

"Yeowp. Only *you* want to stop a heap this side of Calamity. But that feller Merrick, he haint livin' out there no more. I heered he'd done left the country."

Ern let off a baffled, "Ah-h-h!"

"Was you-uns aimin' to buy that place of his'n?"

"I hadn't thought anything about it," Ern said.

"Hit's up fer sale, they tell me," the blue-shaven man said.

II

The road lay white and silent in the morning sunshine. An April breeze was wafting the yellow net curtains out from the front room windows. Sitting at breakfast, they could see the warm white road curve up over the rise, as graceful as a woman's shoulder.

"Did you ever happen to notice," Ern asked, "how much that little curve in the road out there is like a woman's shoulder?"

"No, I never have," Sarah said absently. "Darling, would you please pour me another cup of coffee? It's out on the stove."

"Well, last night, it must have been about two o'clock, I had to get up," Ern said, taking her empty cup into the kitchen, "and when I stepped outside I saw it there, all soft and glazed by moonlight, with the leaf shadows on it, and it was actually startling how much it looked like a woman lying there under a black lace coverlet."

"Sure enough," Sarah said. "Ernie, dear, while you're up, would you please put another stick of wood on the fire."

"No," he said, souring, "let's don't put any more wood on the fire. It's not cold this morning."

Sarah shrugged up her red silk kimono. "I'm chilly!"

"I'll close the windows, then."

"No, let the windows stay up. It's warmer outside than it is in here." She sat, bare knees crossed, a straw mule idly flapping on one foot, and she studied the room with narrowed eyes. "You know, I *like* that big fireplace. I think it *makes* this room."

"Yeah, I wrote Merrick that the fireplace was what sold his place," Ern said. "The fireplace and the limpid, purling crik and the hill and the name of the road we're on." He grinned and said under his breath, "The road to Calamity."

"But I believe I'll have those bookshelves changed," Sarah said with pursed lips. Merrick should've had them carry out the line of the fireplace mantel. And you can just tell that a man planned the kitchen. The kitchen will have to be done over entirely."

"Sure, we'll get a carpenter out here the next story I sell. There's a swell place for a boathouse down there where that little gully runs into the creek. We want to get us an outboard motor."

"Yes," Sarah said mildly, "but before that we must have some walks put in. Flagstone, I should say; rocks are so plentiful round here. These floors are just getting ruined, we track in so much dirt. And we'll have that back field plowed for a vegetable garden."

"Do you think we ought to plan on getting a cow?" Ern asked soberly. "There's room for a stall in the garage."

"Oh, I don't think we'd better bother with a cow just yet. Who'd milk her? Besides, milk is only six cents a quart out here, and we could hardly produce it for that. But chickens—I think we should keep a few chickens. Chickens almost take care of themselves, you know."

They sat pondering the self-sufficiency of chickens. Quiet sounds came drifting in: nearby the rush of the stream through the willows and the chipper of nesting robins; far off in the woods drowsy owls hooted and cowbells clanked softly. But the road was silent. Then, only for a moment, they heard a motor bumble.

"Listen!" Sarah said. "I believe I hear the mailman."

"What time is he due here?" Ern asked.

"He's due right now. Nine o'clock."

"I'll go meet him," Ern said, getting up. "I'm dressed."

"You needn't hurry. He won't be here for another fifteen minutes.

He's still three miles away. What you heard was his shifting out of low on that hill near town. I noticed him yesterday."

"He's on the road to Calamity again," Ern chuckled. He went out the front door and strolled down the knoll toward the big tin loaf that stood on a post at the roadside. Sarah, huddled in her kimono, waited inside the screen-door. The mailman's flivver came coasting round the curve and crunched up to the R.F.D. box.

Sarah saw the mailman hand Ern a big sheaf of letters. This was the day their forwarded mail was due. The mail truck spurted up the other hill, on toward Calamity, but Ern kept standing there.

"What'd we draw?" Sarah cried impatiently. "Ern! Come on!"

But just as he was turning toward the house another car, large and shiny, came speeding down the hill. Ern waved pleasantly and the car screeched in a sudden stop. A pink portly man got out. He took off his Panama hat and stood talking to Ern. Sarah, burning with curiosity, was on the point of going on down, dressed just as she was, when the man got back into the car and drove on toward town.

"Who was that man? Did I get anything? Couldn't you have excused yourself and brought the mail on up? Who *was* he, Ernest?"

"Why that, my dear, was *our* Congressman. None other than the Honorable Herman C. Stogner," Ern said, handing her part of the mail.

"What did he want?" Sarah murmured, already taken up by the mail. "Oh, here's a letter from Mother! And a card from the Tillotsons."

"I don't know what he wanted," Ern said, reading his own mail. "Tucker writes that there's $75 a week waiting for me any time I recover my senses. The old slavedriver."

"Yes, yes; I'm reading, dear," Sarah said. "What'd you say that Congressman wanted?"

Ern looked up from his letter and laughed. "That's the question! When he introduced himself as the congressman from this district, I supposed he was just out riding his political fences. He asked me what I did for a living, and I confessed that I was a writer of high-class fiction. Then came the well-known question: 'What name do you write under, Mr. Uh?' "

"Mother says that she took little Ann to see her first movie the other afternoon. Shirley Temple in something."

"She ought to know better than to take a three-year-old child to a movie. She'll ruin Ann's eyes, taking her to—"

"Yes. Go on, Ern. So he asked what name you wrote under?"

"I said that I sometimes wrote under my own name, but that when I wrote something extra high-class I put it out under the name of Rex Beach. He said he remembered seeing the name, but that he didn't have much time for reading. Then he said, 'I hope you haven't come down here to make us folks out as a lot of ignorant hillbillies, Mr.—?' And I said, 'Forepaugh. No, sir! the people I've met down here impress me as being just as intelligent as any I ever met anywhere.' "

"And what did he say to that? Did that please him?"

"Well, I'm not sure that it did. If anything, I thought he looked rather grim. He said, 'Yeah? Well, I'm glad to hear you like us, Mr. Forepaugh, because we had a story writer living here onct before, a feller named Merrick, and he wrote some books making out that folks in these hills lived just like animals. Now I'm a civilized man myself,' says Congressman Stogner, 'but you know the folks around in these hills, they're proud, and they're not folks to put up with anything like that. Why that feller Merrick, let me tell you what he went and put in a book! You might not believe it, but that Merrick had it right in a book, and it come out in print, too, that folks down here, whenever they had to deeficate, they just run out in the yard to do it and—' "

Sarah shrieked. "*No!* Did he say that? Deeficate?"

"Yes," Ern said. "And he says, 'I was in Washington, D. C., at the time myself, but I knowed about it, and folks around here just about the same as run that Merrick out of the country. I mean they sent Merrick word that these hills wasn't no healthy place for a man like him to stay in.' "

"Ah!" Sarah said, her eyes sparkling. "So *that's* why your pal Merrick left the hills so suddenly. *I* wondered—"

"And with those ominous words, Congressman Stogner got back into his car and drove off," Ern said. "Say, here's the bill of lading and a letter from the Atlas Storage Company. Says they forwarded our stuff by fast freight as per our request of April 23."

"Oh, then that means it'll be here any day now. Darling, our books! Won't it be wonderful to have our books with us again?"

"Yeah, but I believe I miss our radio more."

Sarah gave him a pitying smile. "But, Ern, our radio won't do us any good—we haven't any electricity out here."

"I know. Maybe we can trade it in on a battery set. More than books, or radio, or anything, though, I miss Ann. How soon do you suppose they'll drive out with her? What does your mother say?"

"You can read her letter. I don't want them to come until we get everything arranged the way we're going to live. We can't do much until our freight comes. But I'm just as anxious to get Ann out here as you are. If she stays with her grandparents another month, she'll be so spoiled we won't be able to live with her."

"This is going to be a wonderful place for that child," Ern said briskly. "This big yard to play in. All this sunshine and fresh air. A city apartment is no place for a youngster."

"That's all very well, but we'll have to impress her very carefully about the dangers of that creek. And the road, too."

Ern chuckled. "We sure mustn't let Ann get on the road to Calamity!"

"Why do you keep harping on that?" Sarah snapped.

"Oh, I don't know," Ern said as his grin faded. "It just strikes me as funny."

III

Ern ripped the paper out of his typewriter and got up to stretch. The floor was littered with yellow wads of copy paper. He slapped his naked chest and wiped his sweaty palms on the grimy duck trunks he wore. Although the windows were closed against dust, he could hear the road quickening from where he stood. The room was hot.

He walked over to a side window and raised it. The yard on the shady west side of the house was still cool and sweet with dew. But through a gap in the powdered trees he could see the white hot road quivering in the August sunlight. Chromium glint and rubber stench: the long cars, bristling with bamboo poles, bulging with new canvas, lumpy with dough-faced city dwellers, fried round the curve. And the long gray regiments of dust came trooping up the hillside to scatter among the listless, ashen leaves.

Sarah, hearing the machine go silent, knocked on the door. "Did you have enough breakfast, dear?" she asked warily through the wood.

"Plenty," Ern said. "Come on in if you want to."

Sarah had on a pink glovesilk nightgown.

"I stopped to get a breath of air," Ern said. "It was all right at five o'clock this morning, but it's got so hot now I'm going to have to keep this window open, dust or no dust."

"Yes, do leave it up," Sarah said. "If we'd only get a rain. Surely this tourist traffic won't be so heavy after August. The paper says that the cities are simply unbearable. Never anything like it."

"I suppose we're lucky at that," Ern said. "It must be a little cooler here, or else they wouldn't all be flocking to the hills. What's on your mind? Where's Ann?"

"Oh, she's round on the other side of the house, playing. She's got awfully good about not bothering you while you're working, haven't you noticed? I thought I'd take her and drive into town after the mail."

"How long is it before the mailman is due?"

"About two hours. It's seven now. I hate to wait for him."

"You'd better! We always draw a rejection when you drive in."

"Have we drawn anything else since we've been out here?" Sarah asked bitterly. "And now we don't even get rejections. I can't stand to wait all morning and then see him drive on by without leaving us so much as a circular. At least we ought to be getting some duns."

"Duns all came in last week," Ern said. "First of the month."

"Well, I believe I'll drive in anyway. I won't be long."

Ern sat down at the typewriter again and rested his head over the keys. He sat still listening to Sarah thump hangers in the bedroom closet. He heard her moving about in the next room, getting dressed, and he heard Ann chattering when she brought her in to change her sun suit.

"Is Daddy in there working to get us some money?" Ann asked.

"Sh-h-h!" Sarah said. "Don't disturb Daddy."

They called good-bye to him and he raised his head to answer good-bye. He heard the car coast down the hill and he heard it snort twice pulling the curve. Then he got up and went into the bathroom. He groped behind a stack of towels in the linen closet and brought out a bottle. He read

the plain blue label, "Pure Grain Alcohol 190 Proof," before he tilted it up to the light. A few drops ran down into one corner. He went out to the kitchen waterbucket and tipped the dipper with scientific precision against the bottleneck. He shook the bottle and drank the rinsing.

" 'The word is memory's gelded usufruct,' " he murmured, licking his lips, as he began a methodical search of the kitchen cabinet. A lemon extract bottle had nothing left but the smell. He smelled it and tossed it into the green-enameled wastepaper basket under the sink. Back of the vinegar cruet he found another extract bottle, almost full. He unscrewed the cap and took a swig. His face went wry as he spat a brown mouthful into the sink. He looked at the label again and saw, lettered small above *Vanilla Extract,* "imitation, non-alcoholic."

Ern set the bottle carefully in place and went out on the back porch. He pressed his nose against the screen-wire. Bright water still laced the willows under the knoll, but beyond this limp fringe of greenery stretched the famished creek bed. Gravel banks swept up by last Spring's floods lay bleaching in the sun. Through the silken heat strands he saw the hills on the other side of the creek, as far away as Africa. A soft rain of caterpillars rustled down from the big walnut trees. Somewhere a cicada began screaking.

"And the voice of the locust was heard in the land," Ern muttered, coming to.

He walked out across the parched bluegrass lawn to the open garage. Just inside, among a clutter of torn inner tubes, hardened paint brushes, and oily rags, stood a wooden box full of dusty gin and whiskey bottles. He squatted beside it and began uncorking bottles. One by one, he turned them up, waiting for the solitary drops to trickle down into his eager mouth.

A car stopped at the foot of the hill and he stood up quickly. A gaunt man wearing a tattered felt hat and bright new overalls came toiling up the drive.

"Mr. Forepaugh, howdy!" the man said. "'Ud hit be all right fer me to pick up that air stone jug if you'us th'ough with it?"

"Sure thing, Jess. It's right here in the garage," Ern said, stooping to pick up a gallon jug with a leather thong in the handle. "I emptied it

two weeks ago. I meant to hail you sometime when I saw you pass, but I figured you'd stop by when you needed it."

The gaunt man gave Ern a shrewd look. "How *was* that?"

"That? Just as good as any bonded whiskey I ever tasted, Jess!"

"Wal, that's the way I aim to make hit. You better let me fetch you over a ten-gallon kag of that, Mr. Forepaugh."

"How much you get for that by the keg, did you say?"

"Wal sir, Mr. Forepaugh, I tell you what I'll do. You take a kag of that and I'll make hit to you fer a dollar-fifty a gallon and me furnish the kag. Course, jist sellin' hit out by the gallon jug, I have to ask two dollars, but bein' as hit's you, if you—"

"That'd be fifteen dollars," Ern said musingly. He shook his head. "I can't take it right now, Jess; that's a cinch. Later maybe."

"Oh, I haint worried none about my money, Mr. Forepaugh. I—"

"Nope, Jess; I'm flat broke now. And I want to use every cent I get for some time to come, improving this place."

"All right, then, Mr. Forepaugh. I reckon you know what you want to do. I'll be gittin' on to'ards town, then."

Ern was standing in the garage door watching the moonshiner drive off when he saw Sarah coming round the bend, driving fast. He could tell from the way she slammed it up the drive and then sat in the car without moving to get out that she had brought bad news again. He felt the old sinking feeling as he strolled over to the car, but he tried to sound cheerful when he called, "What'd we draw?"

Sarah sat there with her face on the wheel. Ann stood up in the back seat, her dark eyes round with wonder. Sarah turned her face toward him. It looked green. She kept her eyes closed.

"They both came back," she said in a hollow voice. "Oppenheim sent you a letter. The *Scarlet Review* just sent a printed rejection." She opened her eyes and added in a stronger voice, "The bastards!"

Blood came back into her face and her lips writhed and she began weeping. Ern stepped up on the running board and put his arm round her.

"Don't worry, kid!" he said smoothly. "It'll be all right. I've got a few more tricks up my sleeve. I'll fix it."

"But what'll we *do*?" she sobbed. "How'll we eat? What'll we live on? Here we are, away out here, without a cent. How do you know but what this story you're working on now won't come back the same way? They'll keep it six weeks and about the time we're sure it's accepted, they'll send it back."

"Of course I don't know," Ern said soberly. "A story's just like a lottery ticket. All it costs is the work put in on it. If it clicks, it's worth several hundred dollars. And if it doesn't click, it's just so much waste paper."

"We should never have left New York!" she wailed. "We didn't have all this interminable waiting there. I knew you were making a mistake to throw up your job to come way off out here—"

Ann, with her brown curls flying and her small mouth set, sprang into action. She began beating Ern's arm, scolding, "Daddy, you bad man, you, to make Mother cry. You should be shamed!"

Sarah stopped weeping and mopped her eyes and put a restraining hand on the child. "No, no, Ann; you don't understand, dear! This is grown-up talk. Daddy and Mother are just discussing—"

Ern, seeing her dry up, began to talk fast, "That's right. There's nothing to get hysterical about, Sarah. That's no help. We'll come through O. K. The tradition of the starving genius recognized only after his death is a phenomenon limited largely to the end of the Nineteenth Century."

Sarah blew her nose hard and tried to laugh. "Yeah!" she said thickly. "Where'd you pick up that bit of helpful information?"

Ern grinned. "I was reading a magazine article the other day."

Sarah began tuning up again. "Anyway, we had no business leaving New York," she quavered.

"Yes!" Ern said with fine sarcasm. "We'd a-looked pretty if a run of luck like this had struck us in New York. Getting evicted—"

Sarah shrugged. "Hardly that! You could always have gone back to newspaper work. Didn't Tucker say that your job would be there for you anytime you wanted to come back?"

"Go crawling back to Tucker! I'd sooner go on relief!"

"We can't even go on relief out here," Sarah said bitterly. "We're the gentry out here."

Ern snorted. "The gentry! That's a hot one! The gentry! Mars' and Mist'us Forepaugh, the old Southern gentry!"

Sarah had been craning her head, peering with swollen eyes toward the slope back of the house. "Who's that driving up in our back yard?" she asked.

"I don't know," Ern said, trying to get a look. "Probably another cargo of tourists. They drive right over that 'No trespassing' sign I put up down there at the road, but this is the first time they've driven right up in our back yard."

"You'd better go see what they want, Ern. Just tell them politely that we'd rather not have strangers camped in our yard."

The car, a long sedan bristling with bamboo poles and bulging with new canvas, one with those that sizzled on the road all day, had cut round the foot of the knoll and had come trundling over the lower yard. It had stopped at the foot of the flagstone steps that led down from the back porch to the creek. The house was in full view, but before Ern could get started down there the driver, a thick swart man, had alighted and had started untying the tent. He was followed by a fat woman in flowered pajamas, a redheaded fat boy in knickers, a skinny woman clad in khaki shorts and little else, and a tall man wearing a red beret and smoking a bent-stemmed pipe. It seemed to be an expensive car and it had "Spirit of St. Louis" on a metal plate fastened above the front license tag.

Sarah sat there watching Ern walk off down the yard. She saw the swart man and the tall man stretching the tent out on the lawn and the two women unloading skillets and baskets and thermos jugs and folding canvas furniture. She sat unmoved watching Ern break into a run as the fat boy took a stance with a hand axe before their prized young hickory tree.

"Mother, where's Daddy going?" Ann asked.

"He's going down there to keep that little boy from cutting a tent pole," Sarah said with great detachment.

"Mother, Daddy is a bad, bad man, isn't he?" Ann said.

"Oh, no, dear; you mustn't say that. Daddy's a good man."

She saw Ern stop and speak to the fat boy. The boy stood with the axe dangling, doubtfully watching Ern move on to the group around the

tent. Ern stood talking to the dark man. The others paid no attention. They went right on unloading the car, leisurely piling out metal tent stakes and sofa pillows and tin plates and fishing tackle. Sarah couldn't catch a word. Then, just as the swart man's voice got louder and he began waving his arms, the fat boy stuck his axe into the hickory tree and went over to the car and turned on the radio. Sarah felt some curiosity, but it was not keen enough to make her get out and go down there. It was too good to sit and watch. An orchestra was playing a dance tune. The swart man's arms beat time.

"Mother, what's that man telling Daddy?" Ann asked.

"I don't know, dear," Sarah answered dully.

Then she saw Ern dashing up the flagstone steps toward the house. The swart man was shaking his fists in the air and now she could hear him choking, "You— you— you—" The screen door banged as Ern ran into the house. Sarah jumped out of the car and snatched up the baby. As she scurried toward the house she caught a glimpse of the tourists, like a scene from an old film comedy, with fast jerky movements piling their camp outfit back into the car, stumbling over each other.

Before she could reach the house Ern came plunging out again. She saw the automatic pistol in his hand.

"Ernest! Ernest!" she screamed. "What're you going to do?"

Ern didn't answer. He stood on the top flagstone step and began firing into the air. A clipped branch came crackling down. The tourists, crammed in among a tangle of canvas and tin, banged their car doors and the motor roared. The swart man spun the car round. It teetered on the creek bank a moment and almost slipped over. Then the wheels caught and the car went rocketing across the lawn and away.

"What on earth ever possessed you, Ernest?" Sarah said.

"Shoot it again, Daddy!" Ann said. "Shoot it again!"

"That son of a bitch!" Ern croaked, teary-eyed. "I went down there and told him just as politely as I knew how that he was parked in our back yard and that this was our home and that we'd just a little rather they'd go on down the creek a ways to camp. And then—" Ern's tense voice broke and he stood there gritting his teeth, blinking back tears.

"But what'd he say to you, Ern? It must have been pretty bad to make you rush around and put on a scene like this."

"He called me a *bourgeois*!" Ern blurted.

"A bourgeois?" Sarah said blankly.

"Yes. When I asked him to move on, he got hard and said that he refused to be bullied by a bourgeois member of the land-owning class."

Sarah gave a long scream of laughter. She sank down on the flagstone step and writhed with laughter. Ern scowled at her a moment and then he began laughing, too. Ann skipped around them, clapping her hands and shrilling laughter.

Sarah sat up and dried her eyes and pointed at the foot of the steps. "L-look!" she stammered. "They went off and forgot their m-metal t-t-tent stakes!"

And then they sat on the top step and roared again until Sarah quit laughing and reached over and put her arm round Ern's neck and said, "Oh, my poor, dear, overwrought husband!"

IV

The cold October rain came hissing down through the brittle leaves. Acorns rattled off the roof. The stately walnut trees stood bare with glistening black boles, but the big oaks were wrought of copper. All the hills were flaunting wide wet banners of red and gold and purple. Ragged blue wisps of wood smoke trailed low down the knoll. Through motley leaves quilting the lawn grass was showing green again. And the road was silent, too.

Ern stood at the window with his eyes fixed on the mail box. The logs burning in the fireplace threw a dappled glow across the room. A good smell came from the kitchen where Sarah was canning pears. He could hear Ann tugging at the phonograph crank, playing over and over, "Who Broke the Lock on the Henhouse Door," her favorite record.

The mail truck came slithering round the curve and Ern ran out through the rain, bounding down the sodden slope. Ann came out on the porch, howling, "Take me, too, Daddy!"

He stood hatless in the rain watching the mail truck drop out of sight behind the rise, on its way to Calamity again. Then he turned and walked slowly up to the house with the rain on his neck.

"What'd we draw?" Sarah asked without even leaving the kitchen.

"Nothing but a couple of circulars and another little magazine asking for a story," Ern said. "What'd you expect? We never get any New York mail on Mondays. It'd have to be mailed Saturday to get here Monday. And those punks don't work Saturdays. Except the little magazines—they work while you sleep. Only, of course, we can't pay anything, comrade."

"If it's worth writing, it's worth getting paid for!" Sarah called smartly without showing her face.

"I'd like to send them something, but I don't dare," Ern said resting his head on the stone mantelpiece while he read the letter.

"Yes," Sarah said in the kitchen, "having a story rejected by a proletarian magazine *would* be the final degradation!"

Dear Forepaugh (hearty compromise between Comrade and that fusty old capitalistic salutation, Mister) Dear Forepaugh: All of us here on *The Hammer and Sickle* staff admire your work tremendously and have been wondering whether you do not have on hand a story which you could send us for our big Proletarian-Fiction Number which we are publishing in December. Of course we are not able to pay for material just at this time, but anything you might send us would not be expurgated and we can assure you an appreciative audience of 2000 . . .

He let the sheet slip down into the fire and watched it burn in a sudden spurt of flame. He kept his forehead against the cool stone mantelpiece while he unfolded a psuedo-typewritten circular.

Just for fun, test yourself on these questions from the news of this week: 1. What prince has slot machines in all his bathrooms? 2. How is the president's mouth built for sound? 3. Why are Universal Can profits rising faster than General Can? 4. Who interviewed Stalin's mother this week? 5. What is the new gland treatment for angina pectoris? 6. Where did the former Barbara Hutton go this week? 7. Why will Japanese light bulbs be banned from U. S.? 8. How was the Prince of Wales dressed at a battleship inspection this week? 9. What is the present financial rating of the Dionne Quintuplets? 10. Who would not eat a pound of human flesh for $750,000? . . . What was your score? If you made less than 70% you can readily see how hard it is to keep abreast of the week's

news channels. You can easily see how important it is to read *the* news-magazine which in ninety minutes gives you all the news—curt, clear, complete . . .

The fire made a little gulp and the spangling crisp flew up the chimney. Ern straightened and said, "You know, I feel restless. I'd like to take a trip."

Sarah came out of the kitchen with a basting spoon in her hand.

"Where'd you like to go, honey?" she asked gently, coming over to put her cheek on his shoulder. "I think maybe it'd do you good to take a trip. You never go anywhere or see anyone. And you *need* people! Why you've hardly set foot off this place since we came here."

"That's true," Ern said. "I should get out more."

"Ann and I can stay here and hold the fort. I'm not afraid to stay alone. Where were you thinking of going? New York?"

Ern looked shocked. "Lord, no! All I meant was, I thought if it ever stops raining, we'd take a little spin in the car. I'd like to drive up to Calamity. We've lived here six months without going to Calamity."

"All right," Sarah said. "If it turns out pretty this afternoon, let's do take a drive. These hills are perfectly gorgeous now."

The sun was shining before they had finished their noon meal. It had burned away the rain clouds and the sky was as blue as skim milk. Ern backed the car out of the garage while Sarah put hood and leggings on Ann.

"Let me drive," Sarah said. "You sit back and point at scenery."

"I'll sit back and deliver the travelogue," Ern said.

They coasted down the drive and Sarah headed the car toward Calamity. As soon as they had topped the rise, behind which they had so often seen the mail truck drop out of sight, but beyond which they had never seen, Ern began in the manner of a rubberneck bus spieler:

"On your right, ladies and gents, we have the humble dwelling of Aaron Bowers, traveller, philosopher, and man-about-town. In fact he spends most of his time in town, preferring the urban pursuit of shirking the toil to the bucolic pursuit of working the soil. Although Mr. Bowers, by his own admission, haint much on book-larnin', he has made three round trips across the broad Atlantic, proving that appearances are

deceitful and that foreign travel has its cultural aspects. Two of these voyages were on mule boats prior to America's making the world unsafe for Democracy; the third on an army transport. Mr. Bowers was stationed at a town in France, the name of which he remembers as Barley Duck and there he came to love French gals and cooking. He still keeps his garlic bed, even though his present spouse will not touch the stinking stuff.

"And on your left, just up under that beetling, vineclad cliff, you perceive the entrance to the renowned Counterfeiters Cave, once the home of a thriving industry, and, my God, how the lead money rolled out! But now the smokestacks belch no more and the turning wheels are stilled; the dust of time lies on the floor and the melting pots are spilled; the lizard crawls on the mouldering walls—uh—while the financiers who coined the kale serve twenty years in Atlanta jail."

"Terrible!" Sarah said, laughing. "Go on."

"More truth than poetry," Ern said modestly.

They drove on between flaming fencerows.

"Off to your right is Bird Holler, where stands the squalid hut of G. W. Kemball and numerous family. Kemball has an elderly sister named Lulu, who, years ago, went off to the city a-seeking of employment. Though Kemball himself lived forty years in ignorance of the fact, the federal relief agency, moving in mysterious ways its wonders to perform, ascertained that Lulu had married a wealthy man in St. Louis and now as his relict is living the life of Riley. The relief agent got in touch with Lulu, who turns out to be quite a grand dame. So last summer up drives Aunt Lulu with liveried chauffeur and gleaming limousine. Finding her brother and family sleeping on loose straw and of necessity making one battered tin pail do service in turn as dishpan, facebowl, teakettle, washtub, bread pan, slop pail, garbage can, feed trough, and milk bucket, Aunt Lulu was so touched by the Kemball poverty that she hies herself back to St. Louis and subscribes to *Good Housekeeping* for Mrs. Kemball. Thus far that has been her sole token of consanguineous affection, but the Kemball family worships Aunt Lulu and faithfully cuts out the magazine's colored pictures of model bedrooms and dining rooms and kitchens and pastes them on the mud-chinked walls of their one-room shack.

"And just ahead, clinging to the parti-colored hillside, we approach the weather-stained cot of Jay Macready, the singing master who numbers reading among his several accomplishments. And Mr. Macready's reading is no mean accomplishment, let me tell you. Some highbrow tourists camped on Mr. Macready's place last year and they brought along for light summer reading a copy of *Ulysses*. Evidently they found the tome too hefty to tote back to the city, because they left it along with several tattered magazines and various other middens of modern civilization. Old Jay found the book when he came to clean up the campsite. He reads everything he can get his hands on, so he started on *Ulysses*. After spending six months without much headway, Mr. Macready rose up one morning and tossed the book into the fire. Explaining his action, he said, 'The plot of hit didn't turn out to suit me!' Next Jay clipped a coupon out of a magazine and sent off for a one-volume edition of Shakespeare's works. The Bard of Avon is more to Mr. Macready's taste. 'William Shakespeare,' says Mr. Macready, 'wrote a heap of stuff three hundred year ago, but his writin' is jist now ketchin' on . . .' "

"Stop it!" Sarah giggled. "You're just making all this up as we go along."

"I am not!" Ern said with dignity. "I'm reciting the true chronicle of the road to Calamity. These things are beyond invention."

"But where'd you get all this?" Sarah insisted. "You've never been any farther up this road than our mail box—how can you sit there and spiel off all these intimate things about people you don't even know?"

"Oh," said Ern, hoisting his eyebrows in mock surprise, "haven't you heard about me? I'm your husband, Ernest L. Forepaugh, the Argus-eyed. Sees all; knows all. A gent of preternatural, not to say miraculous, powers. Sam Weller may not have had patent double million magnifyin' glass microscopes for eyes, but I have. I can see a hundred leagues by day or night. I can hear the grass grow. I—"

"Oh, is that trūe!" Sarah said. "Well, you ought to do something about that! At least you have no dearth of material here."

" 'Much material and considerable wealth,' I believe the phrase is," Ern said.

Bitterness welled up in Sarah again. "Maybe if your eyes and ears weren't so keen you could write more saleable stories," she said.

"That's it precisely, my dear," Ern said sadly. "In the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is scavenger."

"If you want to know what I think," Sarah cried out angrily, "I think you've simply hypnotized yourself with a silly name. The Road to Calamity! Talking it and thinking it and mumbling it to yourself! You stand out there at our mail box, gazing off up this road, and every shiftless hillbilly who comes by stops to talk with you. That's where you've picked up all that trivial gossip. You've got so you don't have any more ambition than a hillbilly. If you're so hipped on the notion that this *is* the road to calamity, why don't you make some effort to get us off of it, instead of waiting, waiting—for what, I don't know!"

"All right! All right!" Ern put in softly. "When we get home I'll write and ask Tucker if he can still use a good reporter."

"Daddy," Ann said, leaning over from the back seat to nuzzle his ear, "when we get home will you read me that story about the old Chinaman breaking his neck?"

"Breaking his neck?" Ern repeated. "I don't believe I know any such story, sweetheart." He turned to Sarah. "Do you know what story she means?"

Sarah gnawed her lips and kept her eyes on the road. "No, I don't know what story she means," she answered after a long pause.

"Yes, you do!" Ann said. "That story about them climbing up the inside of a stovepipe and they saw a star."

"Oh, of course!" Sarah said. "She means 'The Shepherdess and the Sweep' in Anderson's Fairy Tales. You mean that one, sweetypie?"

"Yes!" Ann exclaimed. "*That's* the one!"

"No, ma'm!" Ern said. "Not that demoralizing travesty! When we get home I'll read you a *real* story. When we get home I'll read you that raw, palpitating slice of life entitled 'Cinderella.' Don't you think that 'Cinderella' is a much nobler story, Sarah?"

Sarah said that she thought Cinderella was a splendid story.

LINDA

Frederick Scribner

She could remember that day last winter when the ice in the Sonshee was as solid and thick as a wall, and Manly Pray had come through the drifts in an old buckboard for their help, his ears frostbitten badly and the tears frozen on his cheeks. When she and Father and Garvin Sawtelle had arrived, Manly's old folks were almost dead with the flu. The old man and the old woman had come from the Kennebec five years ago and were still trying to make a go of the Atwill farm where the land was about as fertile as cheese. They had died within a week. Father was so softhearted! He had said they would take Manly in to help Garvin and Jay, the regular hands, with the cattle. But she had retorted that it would be one more to do for about the house and it made no difference to her if Manly was only nineteen, he was as big as a man and chewed tobacco. She would have had no part of him but for her father.

For even then something of the ingenuous bold questioning in his face disquieted her, as if to say that the tight little cocoon of her own pleasure in which she had been living was not pleasure at all. But for a long period he was very quiet, mourning for his people, and sometimes during the long evening as he sat by the woodbox with his chin in his hands and his ruddy smooth face in a knot and his eyes slanted in damp wonder, she had been sorry for him. But she had lost all pity with the first March thaws. When the ice cracked up in the river and the frost heaved up in the roads, his eyes

became filled with an impertinent and wistful inquiry, and at last, day before yesterday, he had striven to find an answer.

To think of it made Linda flush and spank her feet on the worn porch boards; she had brought the churn to the porch because of the heat of the kitchen, and cranking with vigor, she tucked in the flying strips of streaked yellow hair, and muttered angrily,

"Tain't as if we hadn't given him bed and board and a home here on the farm after his folks had died of the flu that he shouldn't know enough to mind his manners. He knows what's between me and Tom MacFarland, Tom coming every Wednesday and Sunday night all winter!" And she caught her lip in bitterness. "He knows well enough!"

As she thought of Tom she grew angrier. Tom was so patient! So kindly, when, year after year, she found that she could not yet reconcile herself to leaving Father, a widower with no one to keep the house but her. And Tom's age—he was fifteen years her elder—made his patience all the more remarkable.

Oh, it had been nothing she might not have expected, the warning had been in Manly's face since the first breath of spring. She had been so long accustomed to only Father, the hands, and occasionally Tom for company that she had nearly forgotten how younger people were, but Manly had reminded her—in the way he had of throwing back his head in full laughter and skipping out of her path with elaborate caution as if she might strike him—of her own buoyant spirits ten years ago. Not that now, at twenty-eight, she lacked them. But she had grown into practicality and devotion to her father and had no use for nonsense. To prove it she had given Manly more than one piece of her mind, but such attacks were useless; after a moment of astonishment he was worse than ever. Father simply laughed; he had become fond of Manly as he became fond of each living thing on the farm.

What would Tom say? What would Father think if he knew! She had not yet told because the shame still pressed her, and merely to think of it left her taut and breathless with surprise.

It had been her regular trip to the sty with the dinner garbage. She turned the bucket into the trough and stood a little away from the barn and gazed across the rust-colored meadows to the snow patches still bedding

the Norway pines in the lake acre. She stood there content with the April wind blowing in her hair, letting the sharp breeze quicken the blood in her cheeks while behind her the hogs fought for the swill unheeded. Then, with the thought of milk cans to steam, she bent for the pail, and making her way around the corner of the barn, collided directly with Manly Pray. She was rudely jolted, and crying out, tried to step back. But she could not. Manly's arms flew around her tight, she felt the dismaying vigor of his body against hers, and before she could think he had kissed her firmly on her lips. In that moment her head was a whirl of surprise and sweetness—and she could not allow the latter. She was so stricken that he kissed her twice before she found the strength to fight him off. Then in a heady burst of indignation she tautened, the bucket in her nerveless fingers clattered to the ground—she would have torn his flesh if he had not let her go.

"You—you devil!" she screamed—but the words sounded like whispers in the midst of the wind and the pigs' honking.

Manly was tense and serious. His hand stretched out in front of him as though they still held the curve of her body, or desperately wished to fill themselves again. His face wistful, he said simply, "You're so pretty, Linda." Such a brazen phrase frightened her into a curious calm; her hot anger simmered while she thought, for some reason, of all the things that had been most important to her in the last ten years and at this instant seemed almost trivial—the pattern of her days and pleasant devotion to duty and love of Tom's kindliness.

Manly made a nervous step forward. "I've got so I dream of you nights, Linda." It was then she saw him aright once more—a farm hand, his lank, wiry body clothed in the faded blue dungarees and the thick, redolent, wool-padded jumper he had worn all winter. Insolence! His remark stamped him as a child. For a moment their tense figures were carved against the gray barn, then she gave a cry of scorn and fled for the house.

Fresh! her heart cried, her confusion and questioning gone, and now she nearly wept in shame for him and for herself. Running to the house she banged all the doors and slammed into her own bedroom, safe. And lying still on the multi-colored quilt, she felt that all the pride and dignity

and sure bearing of her body had been soiled by an upstart. She brought forth all the lonely makings of her existence to condemn him.

He was absent from dinner that day—a fortunate thing for him because she would not have eaten at the same table.

Yet after this he was a worse pest than ever in a different way. Whenever he entered the house, his eyes seemed to follow her in reproach as if it were she who had committed a folly. His attitude of restrained accusation put her so nearly out of her wits that last night she had given up in disgust and gone to bed early.

What would Father say? What would Tom think if he knew!

Linda carried the churn inside, and dumping out the butter, molded it into forms and stamped it with the maple-leaf stamp. Then she set it in the cellarway and hurried the dinner along. When it was ready she called the men from work, and soon they came tramping in, their heavy bodies filling the kitchen with the odorous tang of the barnyard. Manly came last, slowly, with the kind of gleam in his eye that might have meant foolish talk before he had spoiled his welcome.

Sitting down to eat, Linda was irritably conscious of the tension between them and wondered if the others sensed it. She did not look at Manly's face, but she could see his surprisingly slender fingers reaching for the bread, potatoes, pickles— The other men conversed leisurely, and toward the end of the meal Father addressed Manly. He had, he announced, bought a ton of hay to finish the season from Bert Kelly on the narrows road.

"You can go right after dinner," he told Manly. "Ought to be back by five o'clock."

"All right," said Manly. "Want me to take the small rack?"

"Yup. Hitch up the grays."

Manly nodded.

So he was well rid of for the afternoon, thought Linda with contempt. It would give her an opportunity to talk with her father; she grimly intended to. But when, for a moment, the men were again out of the house and the rack stood hitched and ready in the yard, Manly suddenly threw the reins over the horses' flanks and entered the kitchen. The boards creaked

gently as he strode across the floor to the sink, and standing before her, asked abruptly, "Will you kiss me?" His face was pale, almost defiant, yet tinged with a curious appeal. Then she noticed what surprised her most. Seemingly he was not ridden with grief, still his eyes were filled with tears. She had never heard of such a thing, never. Ridiculous! Yet as they stood motionless in an antagonistic island of misunderstanding, there was such a magnetic quality in the burnt sadness of his eyes that their bodies seemed to sway together until, with a shiver, Linda jerked herself violently erect, and whispered rigidly, "No!" and again, "No!" as if the metallic repetition of her answer were necessary to convince herself as well as him.

Without entreaty, Manly turned about and left the kitchen, his tall body shutting out the light from the doorway for a second and then appearing by the hayrack. She watched him from the kitchen window as he drew the reins over the rail and pulled himself into the rack and slowly clattered off. Turning, she was emptily conscious of finality.

The afternoon dragged. Linda flew about the kitchen, inventing chores to heal the probe of self-disgust that she no longer had the pluck to tell her father. At first it had been absurd; now it was queerly not absurd and Manly was queerly not a child to be summarily punished for a misdemeanor. Her encounter with him kept rising in her mind; she felt an accountable strain of guilt in herself. She did not know its origin, but it possessed her as though she had had some acquiescent part in the affair which she could not disclose. Against her will she seemed to be drawn into the inner section of an emotion of which she did not approve.

Towards four o'clock Linda put aside her supper cooking to answer the telephone. An unfamiliar voice came over the wire, vaguely distant; a name with which she was only slightly acquainted was given, and the voice went on, "Did you send out a pair of gray horses with a hayrack today? Well, for about an hour and a half there's been a span of gray horses standing by the Sonshee River bridge. At first we thought a man was mending a wheel, but some of the hay tumbled into the river. You'd better send someone for the horses."

The person hung up. Puzzled, Linda thought of calling back, but did not. Instead she threw on a wrap, and going to the barn, told her father.

He came immediately to the house, and Linda, walking beside him, kept thinking of the words, "Some of the hay tumbled into the river."

Father drew on a coat and went out. Linda saw him backing out of the stable with the light truck, and an intensely disturbed part of her mind compelled her to run out and tell him to wait. In the house she remembered that it was Wednesday, and paused long enough to call Tom. They might, she thought, be gone a considerable time.

The river bridge was four miles away on the road to Bert Kelly's. The road was narrow and rough; they jiggled uncomfortably on the hard seat and spoke little. When they came to the river, they saw the span of grays with a half-empty rack in a farmyard nearby, and two or three men standing by the bridge looking into the water. Getting out of the truck, they walked quickly towards them.

"It seems he fell in the river, whoever was driving this load," said one man. "There's hay all over the railing. Must have been topheavy."

Linda walked over the bridge while her father talked with the men. She could not think coherently, but a dim, hideous assumption revolved in her head with the regularity of delirium. Passing her hand heedlessly over the smooth wood of the bridge railing, she returned in time to hear that they had sent to town for grappling irons. As they waited, she was driven along the bank, peering at the matted grass, catching her feet in the hidden roots of alders and twisted willows bordering the river, a chaos of questions in her head that would not be still to be answered. The heavy, sullen sky clung close to the ground and the swollen stream glistened with the leaden shadows of the clouds, scarred with the black lines of branches overhead. The river flowed smooth and full and quiet, a haunt for muskrats in the cold spring. She could not be still, she must walk. She parted bushes to gaze at the dark water, then did not look at all but paced rapidly along the bank, immersed in pictures of what had happened. It came to her coldly, tearing at her heart: the overloaded rack approaching the bridge, Manly suddenly shifting *or leaning far over*—and the hay sliding over the rail with a quick dry rustle, pushing and suffocating—Linda walked faster.

When the men came from town with the drags and a flat-bottomed boat, she was far downstream and hurried back. Her father helped launch

the boat, and the three men aboard let down the irons and rowed carefully back and forth near the bridge.

"Go down farther," called someone from the shore; the boat turned and drifted slowly downstream, the man with the oars catching it and steering it.

Several men and women had driven over from adjacent farms, and splitting into groups, walked along the river and gazed through the thick bushes. Linda walked first with one group, then another. She was aware of Tom's catching up with her at a corner of the stream and was grateful that he did not speak; and in a moment she broke away from him and ran swiftly through the tangled gray brush alone.

Once the men in the boat paused and hauled in on the ropes. Everyone on the banks halted and watched silently until a water-logged snag broke the surface of the water. Linda shuddered; the sight of the black wood, wound with river grass, wet, jagged, and slimy filled her with dread. The men untangled the irons and let them down in the water and again rowed quietly back and forth.

It was growing dusk. Some of the men along the banks lay flat down and peered under the clay caves. A few women left and went into the farmhouse or sat in the cars out of the cold. Wearily the men continued, and the landscape seemed perpetuated in silence and fruitless search. The boat worked faster. When the cry came, Linda was near, standing alone, and she saw a man on his knees pointing toward a dark clump of bushes at a break in the river. She tried to run, but suddenly Father was beside her and held her still. "Now, Linda," he said, "you'd better not. You'd better go back." But she tore away and ran to the place where they were hauling ashore.

Three men were kneeling over Manly's long frame, hastily cleaning wet shreds of grass from his face when Linda broke through and stood by them. His face was etched white against the red clay, and staring, Linda melted suddenly into the great curl of Father's arm.

The men struggled to lift him and brought him to the clearing. Running alongside, Linda placed her palm on the drained pallor of his cheek, then drew it swiftly away. Manly was long, limp, his brown hair was matted over his forehead and river water dripped from his clothes. His lips were

slack and his white teeth glistened. They brought him to the cars and let him down carefully on a blanket and stood away. Linda bent beside him and then sat on the ground and pushed the hair out of his eyes and unloosened the collar of his jumper. When she had bared his ruddy throat and there was an exposed white V of his full chest, she bent suddenly forward until her lips touched his cheek. Around her was a close circle of silence while she strove to warm his cold skin with the warmth of her lips. Her fingers stole to the hard crescent of his chin and she closed her eyes against the lost dry burning of her body—and then opened them to see what was left to her. A minute passed of self-perception, and raising her head hysterically, she gazed out at the darkness that was all she had before her. She could not know everything but she understood that the haunting pain of this would sear any other memory she was likely to have.

A foot stirred the dry grass to a rattle, and behind her came the faint ratcheting of a starter. Linda sprang wildly to her feet; Tom came hesitantly nearer. For a moment, trembling and tearing at her scarf, she stared at them blindly, the round farm faces filled with a curious pity; and uttering a cry so filled with wonder that it seemed not her own, she turned and fled down the hard ruts. And when she stopped and sank upon the high bank, she could do nothing but lower her head in her arms to keep her eyes from the sight of Tom, who had followed her in the dusk.

GOOD-BYE OLD MAN

Thomas H. Thompson

THE SHOWER had stopped, but the old man under the protection of the bus shelter had not noticed. A yellow, flat-nosed bus swung in to the curb, opened its doors, discharged a passenger, and stood impatiently waiting.

"Bus, captain?" called out the driver sharply.

The old man stirred and raised his eyes from the lusterless pool of water standing in a depression of the sidewalk. He was a one-handed man, and he flapped his empty sleeve a little. Without answering or looking up at the bus, he reared his frail body to a stiff erectness. Well, he guessed he'd be getting along down to the river. His cane tapping, he moved in through an iron gate marked "River Summit."

Finding the walk too slippery in places the old man stepped down to the asphalt and cautiously proceeded along the stream of clear water that rushed down the gutter. At every intersection he stopped and peered up and down the shady drive. He saw what he expected to see: rows of wet trees and rows of stuccoed houses and brick houses set well back in bright green lawns. The porches were empty. Not neighborly. He shivered some in spite of the sun, which had just broken through the clouds.

He came to a block where healthy children in sun suits romped in the clear water rushing down the curbing. The children looked gravely at this obsolete old man who walked in the street.

A little straw-haired girl trotted along beside him. Water glistened on her brown skin.

"Old man, where is your arm?"

She tugged at his empty sleeve.

He stopped and looked down at her vacantly. Slowly the dimmest shadow of a smile wrinkled his bony face and lost itself in the complexity of wrinkles about his eyes. He held a hand to his ear.

"How's that, young lady?"

The child seemed somewhat daunted by the hollow sound of his voice. But she said, "Your arm, old man, where is your arm?"

A smile suddenly broke from beneath his yellow beard. His face was a panic of weak eagerness.

"My—my—arm? . . . Cut it off in a corn shredder . . . Corn shredder," he shouted.

"Corn shredder," she repeated in a sing-songy voice.

They seemed not to tire of looking at one another. The little girl felt of his cane and his dangling sleeve. The old man reached out tentatively to take her hand but she was touchy and drew away . . . Yes, she had dimpled hands like his little Ruthy did before she grew up to boss him. Drat her, she never had any of her own. Mollie had children, but only for a few days. They grew up overnight. What becomes of children?

He wanted to touch her little dimpled hands.

"You're a mighty pretty young lady," he said. "How would you like to have a nickel?"

Deliberately he placed his cane on the stump of his arm and drew a long snap purse from his pocket—his inside coat pocket where Ruthy made him keep it because it was safe from thieves. The little girl squinted. But when he offered her the coin, she put her hands behind her and shook her yellow head. Then she pointed at her nurse.

"Lucille won't let me 'cept things from strangers. I get half-a-dollar when I take my cod liver without a face. Good-bye, old man."

She trotted back to her friends and splashed her brown feet in the water.

"Good-bye, old man," she sing-songed once more.

He waved at her with a limp arm.

Well, he had wanted to touch her hands. Taking his cane he turned and proceeded lifelessly toward the river.

The swift water rushing along the curbing followed the drive down to another drive of a lower level. Here it became a milky lake and rumbled into a storm sewer, ultimately debouching into the river below.

The old man stopped before his favorite park bench. It was occupied by a strange young city couple. They were very intent upon each other. Well drat them, they had his place. He looked at them with dim asperity. He supposed this was one of those days when everything went awry. There was a time when he had little patience with such talk. Weak business. But Ruthy had started him out bad that morning when she made him wear those new suspenders. They pulled his shoulders down and cut off the circulation . . . And his coffee had been cold. Given him indigestion. And Ruthy always scoffed at that. But she hadn't ought to. As a person gets older everything becomes a matter of temperature. Well, drat them, that place on the sunny end of the bench was his. They were strangers. He'd never seen them before. And he reckoned he wanted his place. He'd sit down beside them. They wouldn't like it, but they'd get up and leave. Yes, he'd sit down beside them.

He did sit down beside them and they looked around at him out of their rude city faces. Young people in the city had no manners. He'd pay them no attention. There was the river out there; so he would look at it.

Before him was the point where the river joined an arm of the bay. The river current forced a perceptible lane through the murky salt water, wide for a way, tapering and losing its identity before it reached the wharves and city docks. Anchored in the roadstead lay a French freighter very rusty about the flanks. Her damp flag hung limply from her stern, and on the foremost tip of her bow reposed an enormous gull. A mile back up the river a spidery cantilever bore swift moving traffic over its back into a different land. It was a smooth land chequered with green and yellow fields and studded with great dairy barns and diminutive farm houses.

Finally the couple stirred. They got up and marched away holding each other closer than ever. They looked back at him, fussing in their harsh city voices. But he paid them no attention. They were ill-mannered and unseemly and their voices were like crashing brush. He warmed with a tepid sense of triumph.

His eyes were drawn back across the river where it had not rained. He followed a tractor-drawn combine up and down a hexagonal field. Long ago, he thought, it used to be a binder; a binder and two spans of mules. At this great distance, across the river, they would appear small—like the little critters the young man had in the flea show next door to Ruthy's flower shop. Bought those mules from—from—Lidge Buchanan. Remembered now. He had heard Lidge was dead. Yes, he had heard that sometime back. Who would have thought he would have outlived Lidge? And thinking of Lidge he began to hear the mules rattling their chains and straining at their singletrees as the field tilted upward. The noise came faintly at first; then it flowed as light, continuous music. For now he was across the river in the field himself, or the field and the binder and the mules had, somehow, come across to him. A negro, a fat religious negro called Kite, sat in the seat of the binder and cried out to the leaders, "Ho, Gladys, Myrtle, git yo feet a-movin'!" Kite liked to see those mules work while he sat and shouted—that was Kite for you. Then a dog named Rip barked as a cottontail sprang from under Myrtle's feet. The rabbit zigzagged across the stubble towards the nearest thicket, Rip dancing after it yelping confidently. In a minute he would come back to tease the sweating shockers a while before he gave up the rabbit . . . Then there was a threshing machine in the field puffing its yellow stream of straw. The conical straw pile became a mound and children played on it. The children were too small to notice; for the sky was clouding and it would likely shower that afternoon . . . And the precious grain was sewn in sacks, and the number of sacks marked down on the barn door, under last year's number of sacks and the number of sacks the year before. The column should have been started higher, for it was getting too low on the door.

There was a young man on the shady end of the bench. Where had he come from? Nervous as a colt. Seemed worried. Well, maybe he would not say anything. The thought of more young people depressed him a little. He closed his eyes and sat thinking the thoughts that came to him: Year after year, year after year a man grows slowly older until his little world has faded before his dubious eyes and a new world, boastful and shrill and lonely has leaped up in its place. Knowing he is not needed, yet a man is not eager to leave. Men dread death; yet they want it. He dreaded it more

than most, he guessed. He dreaded it more than he used to. Death was cold, and cold was what he hated. Soon after Nancy went, he might have gone easy enough. He might have dropped into the river some dark night and never known the difference. He was that desperate and lonely. But he didn't. Ruthy came and bossed him into selling the farm and coming to live with her. There was something warm in her bossing, he supposed. Yes, it was pretty to speak of returning to God. Nancy was always talking that way. It was God this and God that . . . Poor Nancy, she had been gone a long time. Went in perfect faith with Bible in hand, so to speak, and talked about his coming after her. Yes, it was pretty to speak of returning to God, and he believed it, but it must be a shock. Made a man afraid to lie down in his bed at night with nothing but his sheets to hold him there . . . Getting real chilly now. Felt it first in the stump of his arm where the circulation of his slow-pumping blood was poor. He wished he could take the little girl's chubby hand. It was wet and brown and warm—real life there. He wondered if she were still playing in that stream of water. Drat her. She had refused his nickel. In his day—oh, well. But he didn't want to face her going back if he couldn't touch her hand. He would take the long way back to the avenue if he were not so tired. He would take it back anyway if Ruthy would not scold him for being late. He should get up and move along, but it was not disagreeable to sit and shiver in the sun.

Tut, tut, that young man on the end of the bench was fidgeting again. He had been smoking one cigarette after another and extinguishing each with the heel of his shoe. Reminded him some of Happy Bishop's boy with his long sensuous face and clefted chin. Seemed civil enough. He was nervous about the passage of time, for he kept reaching out his arm to draw his sleeve back from his wrist watch. Yes, he was going to speak. Afraid of that.

The young man lifted a wiry hand to his mouth, taking for granted the old man's deafness.

"Colonel, what time does your watch say?"

He had to repeat his question. The old man could hear, but it was so hard to pay attention. All right, he wanted know the time of day. He guessed he could tell him that. He reached his trembling hand into his vest

pocket and drew out a heavy gold watch in a hunting case. The lid sprang open. It was four-thirty.

The young man snapped his fingers.

"I guess she stood me up," he said fiercely. Yet his voice was not harsh like those other young people. All the Bishops had low voices. He turned to walk away, but suddenly came back and said to the old man abstractedly.

"Say, colonel, you're from the South, aren't you?"

The old man's sunken eyes flickered. He was always proud to say where he was from. He understood.

"Why, yes, Kentucky, Kentucky. Uh—"

"Kentucky, eh? Louisville?"

"No, no. Harrisville—county seat of Sutton County."

"County seat, eh."

The young man seemed ready to say something more, but wandered away toward the river without even saying "good-bye" or "much obliged." The old man was sorry in a way. Reminded him considerable of Happy Bishop's boy. Guessed the young man was in trouble, but the troubles of youth were never serious. They always passed or turned into new troubles, and what was the difference.

Getting real stiff now. He'd have to be moving along by and by.

A pretty young woman with some sort of cape on her arm was coming down the steps toward the bench. She was slender but full-breasted in the old-fashioned way. She carried her head tilted back dreamily and seemed to be looking at the gull that dipped and soared above the French freighter. Must be the one Happy Bishop's boy was waiting for. She gave no sign of seeing him until he rushed up to her in his impetuous way. He kissed her a real kiss right there. That was a Bishop for you. She placed her hand in his and they walked down to the water's edge. They moved without sound. He was wary and cat-like. She was gentle and assured. All the Bishops were tomcats.

They seated themselves and the young man started pelting her with questions. He sat facing her, speaking impulsively, gesturing with his nervous Bishop hands . . . Yes, it seemed like they quarreled. He could not be sure the way the past drifted in and out of his mind and mixed him up. Yes, he guessed they had, but it was a lover's quarrel. They would make

up and have babies, babies with soft dimpled hands like the little girl's.

Well, he had wanted to touch her hand.

Suddenly, he was sick at the thought of walking past the little girl. Children could be cruel with their sharp, heedless laughter. But he could not be late meeting Ruthy. Promptness was a habit he had instilled in her. Now she would not let it die in him. A man could not go clean-shaven when he had worn a beard the better part of his life.

Again he reared his frail body to a stiff erectness. He steadied himself like a drunken man and gazed out to the river. The gull was flying noisily over the shallows. All at once it poised clumsily and dropped like a stone into the water. It arose, and having gobbled something down, flew back to its perch on the freighter.

The old man proceeded up the winding drive. The water still rushed along the curbing. Where was it all coming from? He was cold and the sound of rushing water kept him cold. And the asphalt was still black with wetness. But he was glad he was not going down hill; for he had a great dread of falling when the ground sloped steeply away from him.

Now, here was the corner. He could go either the long way or the short way. He halted and looked up and down each drive hopefully as though he could solve his problem with the looking. If he went the long way, Ruthy would scold him. If he went the short way, there was the little girl with her soft, chubby hands that he couldn't touch. She was there for he could hear the children's shrill voices piping through the wet trees. His mouth was dry, and his stiff throat hurt with each short breath he took. Drat her. She had hurt him. Might as well admit it. She had known it, too. That was the vanity and cruelty of women. She wanted to play with his sleeve and handle his cane. Curiosity that was what it was. That was what he was—a curiosity. The little minx.

Well, he was going the short way. He knew all the time, but he didn't know why. He'd show her. He'd march right past her. Head and eyes straight to the front. Tarnation, he wouldn't look her way at all. His old cheeks warmed with weak fury. He lifted his head, straightened his shoulders and started off swinging his cane ahead. He stepped out heedless of the wet drive.

Yes, there they were. The maids were herding them up to take them home. Little straw hair was right in the middle of them like a regular jumping jack. When he got closer, he could not look without turning his head. No, he wasn't going to pay her any mind. It was a matter of principle. Never worry, she would see him. He could swing a cane as good as the next man. He could march in any veteran's parade. What a lot of noise children could make.

Now . . . Now he was past them. This was all right. This was fine—wasn't it? He wondered if she had seen him. Course she had. Nothing'd ever slip by that little rabbit. Well, he had marched right past her.

There was a sing-songy voice piping behind him.

"Old man, old man, wait a minute."

He stopped, looking straight ahead, his thin legs trembling.

"Shoo," said the little girl breathlessly. Then she piped impishly, showing her white baby teeth, "Old man, Lucille said I could 'cept the nickel if I wanted to."

The old man looked down, and in his eagerness he began flapping feebly like an old broken-winged rooster.

"Hew—hew. Well—"

His shaking hand reached inside his coat pocket for his purse. He unsnapped it, and with his fore and index finger he fished out a coin. Then he suddenly collected himself. With his thumb he moved it craftily to the palm of his hand that he might imprison her little fist as she took it from his hand. He could take no chances.

There it was: a small warm bird in his hand for an instant before it flew. His mask of a face twitched. He caressed the palm of his hand with long bony fingers.

"Good-bye, old man."

"Good-bye," he said with some energy.

PICNIC AT HAMBURG

K. C. Shelby

ALL SUMMER long, during the hot days we plowed together in the fields, my brother and I had been looking forward to the social event of the season —the picnic at Hamburg. It was an annual affair, given by the Catholic Sisters of a neighboring Germantown settlement to raise money for their church. And because of the fact that it was conducted along nonreligious lines, for commercial reasons, Protestants were cordially invited. Each year the fame of the Germantown women as cooks grew, each year more and more vocal advertising was made as to the amazing quality and quantity of food they served for fifty cents per person, until by now the greater part of three counties turned out on that day. And to miss the picnic at Hamburg was a public admission that your social standing was about zero.

I had been once. That was when I was quite a youngster, a boy of five or six. But the memory of its long food-piled tables—miles of tables, it seemed to me then—and its many tall, deep-layered cakes that sprung like snow-covered posts from the tables at regular-spaced distances—these memories were with me yet, and vividly.

But all that had been years ago. Things were different now. Now my mother was a widow, and I had an older brother in the War. Now I was fifteen, and wore long pants, and could do the work of a man on the farm. I had stayed away from high school that year on purpose. It was considered far more heroic to stay home and work in the fields. I felt pretty

big. And now, as a final proof of my prematurely acquired manhood, I was to be allowed the privilege of accompanying my brother Bob this year to the picnic at Hamburg. True, my mother didn't seem as enthused over the idea as I did. But a boy had to find out about such things sometime, she admitted grudgingly.

Aside from the gastronomics of the occasion, there were to be other attractions as well. There would be music. Dancing. Girls. Since there had been a scarcity of older boys at neighboring parties that winter, I had already learned how to dance. But the thought that we were to arrive at the picnic about sundown—at a time when heretofore I had always had to leave—this thought in itself seemed to be glamorous and exciting. For the past week now, I had scarcely been able to talk of anything else.

We had hoped it would rain before the picnic. Everything was dry. It was mighty dry. I was a little worried about our buggy. Its wooden wheels, during the drouth, had shrunk to a size too small for its steel rims. This was a common occurrence in the country when it did not rain. I had hoped against hope for a nice deep water hole to drive the buggy in and let it stand overnight, so the wood would become watersoaked and swell to fit the rims. Otherwise when we drove on the gravel road that led to Hamburg the rims would rattle most embarrassingly. And not only that. They might come off.

But it did not rain. And there were no water holes. So about three days before the picnic Bob and I contrived an invention of our own to swell the tires. We placed each buggy wheel in a minature hog-trough—two of which I found, the other two being built special for the occasion—and filled each trough with water. Each morning before we went to work in the fields one of us would go out and prop up a buggy axle and give each wheel a spin. Thus the entire circumference of the wheels would get a portion of the water. I would repeat the process when I came in at noon for lunch. And again, several times, before we went to bed. If the wheels could have turned continually, like a windmill, the wooden part of the wheels would soon have swelled to fit the steel rims. But, alas, we had other and more pressing duties. Consequently, the less-than-one-fourth portion of the wheel that soaked in water while we worked or slept would

be swelled up nicely; but the remaining three-fourths would be dry as powder.

The day of the picnic came. It was mid-August, sunshiny, not a cloud in the sky. I went out early to look at the buggy wheels.

"I believe they'll hold," I said to my brother.

Bob examined them too. "Yes, they look all right."

We got ready for the picnic.

We curried the horses with our currycombs and sleeked them down with a brush. We put on their best harness with the brass trimmings and their bridles with the pictures-in-glass rosettes at the sides of their heads. We used the spread rings. The spread rings were a series of red-white-and-blue celluloid rings strung together with loops of leather. They were fastened on the horses' bridles and allowed them to spread far apart when they trotted. They were used chiefly for decorative purposes; they added that necessary devil-may-care touch to a double-rig that made it dashingly complete. Blaze and Roger held their heads high. We had not let them run on pasture that morning with the other stock; we had kept them up in the lot and fed them solid food. They were rearing to go. Blaze pranced and chomped on her bit. Roger—who was stocking-footed and white-hooved—he shied sidewise and tried to see things to get scared at in the rose bushes. They were feeling good, all right. And Bob and I were feeling good.

After we got the horses hitched to the buggy we tied them up to the hitching post in front of the house and went inside to get dressed. We had delayed dressing on purpose so we could be sure we didn't get horsehair on our clothes. We each took a bath in the two zinc wash tubs that stood behind the smoke house. There was a screen of young plum bushes we could jump behind quick in case we saw someone coming down the road. After we finished bathing we put on our clean drawers and fresh-pressed pants and shined-up Sunday shoes. We dressed up plenty. To use my mother's own expression, we dressed up fit to kill and cripple.

Although Mother had repeatedly stated her preference of staying at home that day instead of accompanying us to the picnic—a fact that, at that time, seemed to me strangely abnormal—nevertheless, she was excited over seeing my brother and me get ready as we were. She couldn't do enough

to help us. She left her applebutter cooking and went rummaging around in the bureau drawer until she found my father's gold collar-buttons and cuff-links. She said Bob might as well put them on and wear them, since he would inherit them anyway on the day he was twenty-one—and that was just a matter of days now. I gazed upon such adult privileges with a tinge of awe and not a little envy. My brother's entire wardrobe, for that matter, reached a sartorial perfection I could scarcely ever hope to accomplish. Today Bob was wearing his orange silk shirt with the detachable red-and-cream peppermint candy striped collar and cuffs. For sake of contrast he wore a violet purple necktie. It went right nicely with the orange shirt. His suit was green. His low shoes chocolate. I can't remember his hat.

My own suit, being my first with long pants, was a modest thing of cocoa-brown with a pin stripe of bright green. It had a belted coat, cut high. I, too, was wearing a silk shirt to the picnic. It was one that had belonged to my brother and had been given to me only because of my oft-spoken admiration for its flamboyant coloring. It was cream-and-lavender stripes, the stripes not quite an inch wide, and each lavender stripe split delightfully down the center with a narrow hairline of grass-green. It was for this shirt, really, that my brother had purchased the violet purple necktie. But the narrow hairline of grass-green in the silk shirt matched—at least, it very nearly matched—the green pin-stripe in my cocoa-brown suit. So there you were. The shirt was a little big on me and Mother had wanted to cut the collarband down to a size to fit my neck. But I was afraid this might spoil the tailored effect of the material. Consequently, when I first wore the shirt I had to lap it over to a second buttonhole mother had made. But this didn't allow the front part to hang quite right, either. So now when I wore the shirt I merely stuffed the surplus of collarband up under the collar and trusted to the tightness of my collar to hold it in place. This was a bit uncomfortable, and caused me not a little anxiety—especially during moments of physical exertion. Still, it was worth it to know that—outwardly, at least—my silk shirt presented an effect that was smartly tailored.

The horses had grown so impatient waiting they had stomped out a great hole there by the hitching-post and later I had to fill it with a

spade. But that was later. Just now, of course, we did not have time to bother with such trifles. Mother stood out on the porch, shading her eyes from the sun glare with one hand while she waved goodby to us with the other. Bob had three dollars in his watch pocket. I had half that amount. It was money Mother had given to us—it represented many weeks of hoarding of her egg money. Yes, we could buy us a silk shirt in town and have it charged on the books. But until the fall crops were harvested, actual cash was a thing we seldom saw. Both Bob and I felt pretty mean about taking the money. We protested, half-heartedly, that we wouldn't need half that much. Dinner was fifty cents a person. Dancing fifty cents. What would we do with it all? Mother said we'd better take it along anyway—just in case. On long trips like this—Hamburg was a little over fourteen miles—you never could tell. It was best to play safe. We took her advice and kept it all.

It was a fine day, though hot. The good clean scent from the horses followed us as we rode, and to the right of us the cornfields were tall and heavy with the smell of pollen. I looked at Bob sitting there beside me. He didn't look like my brother. He looked like some handsome, dressed-up stranger. All summer long we had worked hard in the fields together. But now here we were, dressed up and riding along with money in our pockets. Here we were on our way to the picnic at Hamburg. We looked at each other. From the sheer joy of the moment we laughed aloud, simultaneously.

It was then that it happened. A heavy bump-bump-bump-bump that made the buggy lurch about drunkenly. "Whoa," said Bob in a funny, trembly voice. The horses stopped and we looked down. There it was. The right rear wheel—that was the one I had feared most—was nothing but wooden spokes. What part of the wood was left between them turned over with clumsy flopping sounds, sending up dust clouds. The steel rim was still rolling a little ways behind us in the road. I looked at Bob. Bob looked at me. Slowly—for it wouldn't do any good to hurry now—we climbed down to the weed-dusty road below.

"It's broke," said Bob.

"Yes," I said.

We stood there looking down at it.

The afternoon sun beat down hot upon my neck. There wasn't a shade tree in sight. I had visions of the long dusty walk back home, while at Hamburg the picnic would no doubt be reaching its height of revelry. Yes, the wheel was hopelessly broken. Before the buggy could be moved again, the wheel would have to be repaired by a blacksmith. It would have to have a new wooden frame and the steel rim welded on. But the nearest blacksmith was miles away—in case he hadn't closed up his shop for the day to attend the picnic.

"What are we going to do?" I asked.

"Do? We're goin' to Hamburg." Bob spoke grimly.

"But how?"

"I don't know *how*." Bob seemed slightly provoked with me, as if this were a matter of small importance. "But we're goin'."

Already he was looking about in the road, along the fence posts, for possibly stray strands of bailing wire. But there was no wire. And even if there had been, it would have done us little good now. Bob looked at the broken wheel and scratched his head. He looked across the field, not quite a quarter of a mile away, to John Eskew's farmhouse. And his face brightened. "If John and his folks haven't gone off to the picnic, maybe he'll let us ride along in their car," Bob said hopefully.

"But what would we do with the horses?"

Bob's voice was kind when he spoke, almost paternal. It was as if he pitied me for being so helplessly ignorant. "I guess John shorely wouldn't mind 'em a-runnin' on his pasture for jest one day."

We tied the horses securely to a fence-post and cut diagonal across the field, walking through wheat-stubble. That way was nearest. By the time we reached John's house we had both worked up a lively sweat. We said *hello*. We knocked on John's front door and on his back door. No one came.

"They've gone to the picnic," Bob said cheerfully. He turned and started walking toward the barn.

"Where are you going now?" I wanted to know.

"I'm a goin' to see if I can find John's buggy. He's got one somewhere about the place, unless he's sold it since he bought that Ford."

"But you wouldn't use it without his consent?"

"I will if it's here."

"But John might not like it."

"He wouldn't mind. Least wise, I don't think he'd mind *much*."

The idea seemed sinful. Nevertheless, I liked it. I helped Bob look about the place for the buggy. Finally we found it. It was in the South end of John's hay-barn, partly buried in an avalanche of pea-hay and dust. The chickens had found it popular as a roosting place. It didn't look a bit inviting, I can tell you. But it had good wheels. We saw that. Bob went exploring around and found one of Aunt Mendy's milking aprons in the gear shed. (Aunt Mendy was John's housekeeper, and a strict Christian woman if there ever was one.) Bob tore Aunt Mendy's apron right in two.

"It wasn't much good any more anyway," Bob said. He tossed me the other half of Aunt Mendy's apron. "Now, if you'll go to the horse trough and fetch us a bucket full of water," Bob said. I went and got the water. We cleaned the buggy.

After we had gone for the horses and hitched them to the buggy, it looked right nice. We washed ourselves on John's back porch and dried on the roller towel. I fixed my collar. We were just driving out the gate when we saw a Ford coming down the lane in a cloud of dust. At first we thought it was John. But it wasn't John. It was Dorcey Green, John's next-door neighbor. Dorcey was fat and didn't work much because his mamma had spoiled him sending him to town school. Neither Bob nor I liked Dorcey very much. He stopped his shiny Ford in the lane beside us. We said *hello*. Dorcey said *hello*.

"I'm goin' over to John's to water his stock," Dorcey said big like, as he always talked. "He asked me to look after 'em while he's away at the picnic."

Both Bob and I doubted this statement. We knew Dorcey had seen us from his front porch and was just trying to be nosey.

"Ain't you goin' to the picnic, Dorcey?" Bob asked, friendly-like.

"I'm going after it gets cooler," Dorcey said high-toned. "I'm taking Miss Hallie." He looked meaningly at my brother. Everyone knew that Miss Hallie was struck on Bob, ever since she had come to board at Dorcey's house while she was teaching school. But Bob didn't say anything. "We didn't want to go till it got late because nothing but hicks go early to a place like that," said Dorcey.

"I reckon that'll make all the country folks feel right bad," said Bob, still friendly-like.

All this while Dorcey had been staring straight at the buggy. Now he asked, sharply, "Ain't that John's buggy you driving there?"

"Yes, it's John's buggy," Bob said, real quiet-like. "Our buggy broke down. So we a usin' John's."

"Does John know about it?"

"We figger on tellin' him, soon as we run acrost 'im at the picnic. Why, Dorcey?"

"Nothin'?" said Dorcey. "Only I don't think John'll like it, you all taking his property like that."

Bob gathered up the reins, elaborately casual. "I reckon I've been on enough coon hunts with John Eskew to feel pretty well acquainted with 'im," he said. "Anyway, Dorcey, I 'low that's a matter that rests entirely between John and myself." Bob tapped the horses then and we were off to the picnic in a cloud of dust. I looked back. Dorcey sat there in his Ford, staring resentfully after us. Dust fog floated over him. It settled like brown cocoa on his shiny Ford fenders.

It was nearing five o'clock when we reached the picnic. Too early to eat yet. We would put off eating purposely until we were ravenously hungry so we could hold more. We wanted to be sure and get our fifty cents worth. This required not a little will power, since already our nostrils were acutely conscious of the hickory-smoke-laden luscious smells from the barbecue pits. Visiting dogs, lured by this tantalizing smell away from wagons where they were supposed to be keeping guard over quilts and sleeping babies and black parasols, openly neglected their duty while they sat around the wire-fence enclosure on hind quarters, sniffing the air and looking hopefully-wistful.

All of a sudden there were too many things to see. Balloons in bright clusters; sizzling hamburgers; lemonade and orangeade in tall glass jars; gaudy stands, where gold-toothed women with painted faces dispensed paper hats and rubber balls on strings, barber-pole striped horns, and gay confetti. Dance music came irregularly from a grandstand somewhere in the distance. A small boy of eight was lost and crying in the crowd. His white starched blouse had lost its drawstring, the front of it was stained

with strawberry soda water. Yet he remembered, automatically, it seemed, to blow up a red balloon he carried and let the air out in whining sounds.

"This way, folks. Supper just starting. All you can eat for half a dollar, folks. Pay fifty cents and eat all night." People paid their money and passed through turnstile gates that led to long food-piled tables under the leaf-arbor. The wilted sassafras and oak-leaf smell mingled with the cooking smells. Each long table was a centipede of moving elbows. We heard scraps of conversation. "Pass the fried chicken, please." "Thanks for the lemon pie." Tall, black-robed Sisters of Charity moved like shadows between the tables, each face like a pale round moon in its frame of white. Their eyes shone with suppressed excitement at this unaccustomed mingling with the crowds. I wondered if it were true that each of them had her head shaved. Other women, buxom German ones with faces flushed from the cooking-stove fires, moved briskly about replenishing half-filled dishes.

Bob and I made straight for the dance floor. We wanted to see how many people we knew. Even at this time of day, with many country folks eating supper and the town people not yet arrived, the dance floor was crowded. Someone called Bob's name and we turned around. There was Miss Hallie. She was by herself.

Bob said, "I thought you come with Dorcey, Miss Hallie?"

"I did," said Miss Hallie. "That is, my cousin and I rode *in* with him," she corrected.

"Where is he?"

"Over there, dancing with my cousin. She's the girl in white. See?" We looked and sure enough, there was Dorcey, dancing with a girl in white. They didn't see us. "She's visiting me from Marble Hill," said Miss Hallie. "She came down to attend the picnic." I could see she was a lot younger girl than Miss Hallie. She had straight black hair, bobbed long and smooth. She had grey eyes. She was pretty, all right. Bob didn't notice her much. He turned back to Miss Hallie. Miss Hallie kept tapping her toe against the floor to the music and making her eyes dance. "Aren't you dancing, Mister Bob?" she asked.

"Why, I'd love to, Miss Hallie," Bob said, real pleased-like. "You want to try it with me?

For an answer Miss Hallie held out her arms and smiled. Bob smiled too. They moved off, dancing real nicely together. And I was left standing there. I looked about to see if there was anyone in the crowd I knew. The only one I saw was John Eskew's housekeeper, Aunt Mendy Diddleine. I didn't want to see Aunt Mendy, I kept thinking how mad she would be when she found out about her apron. But Aunt Mendy kept motioning toward me with her palm-leaf fan. I went over to see what she wanted.

"Son, I want to know if you've seen John?" Aunt Mendie asked. She acted real mad about something, and sort of worried.

"Why, no ma'am, Aunt Mendy," I said. "We just got here."

"Well, you keep an eye peeled out for him, and if you run acrost him, let me know." There was a dangerous undercurrent of ice in Aunt Mendy's voice. "The idey of him a spendin' his money on that red-headed widder Julie Burns. The last I saw of 'em they was out there on that dance floor a-carryin' on somethin' disgraceful."

I knew John was a widower and that he sometimes drank a bit too much. I knew, too, that Aunt Mendy wasn't really his aunt but that everybody just called her Aunt Mendy. But I knew Aunt Mendy had been John's housekeeper for a long time, so I just pretended it wasn't to me she was talking, but to the two women seated there beside her. I didn't say anything.

Just then that dance number ended and Dorcey and his partner came back to where they had left Miss Hallie. When Dorcey saw Miss Hallie and Bob come walking off the dance floor together he looked real queer. His face got all red and he began to swell up. He didn't wait for Miss Hallie to introduce her cousin.

"Well, I see you finally got here?" Dorcey said real snooty-like, looking at my brother.

"Yes," Bob said, pleasant. "We finally got here."

"After stealin' a buggy to get here in," Dorcey added.

Bob's face went white. But his voice was quiet enough. "I wouldn't be a-makin' rash statements like that if I was you, Dorcey. Folks might think you mean 'em and they'll get you into trouble."

Dorcey sneered. "Don't worry about me. I'm twenty-one. I can take care of myself."

"You may be twenty-one," said Bob. "But you're just a big soft kid."

"I'm big enough to get you scared," said Dorcey. "Now listen. You lay off dancing with Miss Hallie. She's my girl, see?"

Bob's voice began to tremble. "You leave Miss Hallie's name out of this, Dorcey."

"You won't do anything," said Dorcey. "Anyone can see you're a coward. You're a thief *and* a coward."

"All right. You asked for this." Bob let him have it. Right under the chin. Dorcey staggered and went reeling backwards. He crashed into the grandstands where the musicians sat, breaking through the wooden rail and almost ruining a bass fiddle. He came up crying and cussing. He had his knife out. I didn't want to see Dorcey cut Bob up with that long-bladed knife. I grabbed Aunt Mendy's hickory walking stick. It was the only thing I could find. It had a hooked end. I hung it around Dorcey's neck from behind and jerked with all my weight. Dorcey toppled backwards and his knife went clattering across the dance floor. Someone grabbed it. Bob and Dorcey went together like two tomcats. I saw blood. A woman fainted. Miss Hallie was wringing her hands and crying. Miss Hallie's cousin just stood there, her grey eyes big and round. Just as Bob and Dorcey were beginning to get in some nice licks, here come the sheriff out of the crowd, his metal star shining. He got between them.

"What's all this?" asked the sheriff. He acted real calm. He was a big fellow. He held Dorcey off by the collar with one hand and Bob off with another. He said, "I guess you two young sprouts can finish your fighting down at the callyboose." Bob didn't say anything. But Dorcey started talking back. The sheriff shook Dorcey. Dorcey hushed.

I walked over to give Aunt Mendy her walking stick. Dorcey pointed to me. "He was in it too, Sheriff."

The sheriff looked at me. He didn't believe Dorcey. "What did he do?" he asked.

"He hit me over the head with that walking stick."

"That's a lie," said Bob.

"Shut up," said the sheriff. He looked at me. "You better come along too."

I went. But not before I got a look at Miss Hallie's pretty cousin. She was watching me. There was real admiration in her big grey eyes. I felt proud to go to jail then. It was like going away to war or something.

The jail wasn't a far piece. Just downtown. The sheriff didn't take us off in a patrol wagon. He took us in his Ford. Dorcey sat up in front with the sheriff. Dorcey had a black eye. I sat in the back seat with Bob. Bob's nose had got mashed. It kept bleeding into his handkerchief.

They didn't have a very big jail in Hamburg. Just two cells. I suppose they hadn't counted on such thriving business. It was sort of dark inside the cells. One of the cells was already occupied. The sheriff put Bob in there. He put me and Dorcey in the other one. The cells were side by side but the walls were solid nearly all the way up so you couldn't see your neighbor. You could hear them, though. I heard Bob talking.

"Why, John Eskew!" Bob said, surprised. "What you doing here?"

"They got me for being drunk and disorderly," said John. "At least, that's what they *called* it."

"When was that?" Bob asked.

"I reckon it must 'ave been about noon. What time is it now?"

"Not quite six o'clock yet."

Dorcey had flopped down on the cell's only cot. He was all swelled up and wouldn't talk. I stood there listening.

"What you in for, Bob?"

"Fightin'."

"Who with?"

"Dorcey Green."

"That big lummox? I hope you beat 'im up?"

Bob told John about me and Dorcey being in the next cell. He told John how the fight had started. "I hope it was all right about us using your buggy like that, John?"

Apparently John seemed to think any other course would have been ridiculous. "Of course it was all right," he said.

I became suddenly bold. "John," I hollered over the wall, "did you tell Dorcey to water your stock for you while you were away at the picnic?"

"No," said John. "Who said I did?"

Dorcey made a lunge for me. I ducked and yelled. The sheriff came back to see what was wrong. "What's the matter with you guys?" He glared at me. Dorcey tried to look innocent.

"Sheriff, can't you let us out of here?" John pleaded.

"Not unless you got ten dollars a piece to pay your fines."

John's voice sounded as if he were grinning. "I reckon that little widder got most of my spare cash," John said.

I got to go back to the picnic grounds now," the sheriff said importantly. "But the jailer's here just outside. If you boys behave yourselves, we'll turn you out in the morning. But any more monkey business and we'll make it ten days." He turned away then. I looked at Dorcey and made a face.

After the sheriff had gone John said, real wistful-like, "I reckon they're just about now eatin' supper out at the picnic."

Bob said, "I reckon."

All of a sudden we couldn't find anything to talk about. I kept wondering what Mother would think when we didn't show up tonight, and what the horses would think, being tied up all night out there on the picnic grounds? I kept thinking of Miss Hallie's pretty cousin with the grey eyes. I hadn't even got to find out what her name was. I could find out, of course, by asking Dorcey. But I refused to give him that satisfaction.

It must have been half an hour later, when my feet were getting pretty tired from standing on them, that I heard voices outside our cell. A woman's voice, high and shrill and indignant, and the jailer's voice, trying to soothe her. "If that honery John Eskew's in this here jail, then I want you to let me talk to 'im," said the voice. The next moment the jailer appeared, and with him was Aunt Mendy. Aunt Mendy was hopping mad and a raising Old Ned. She was threshing her hickory stick about in every direction. Aunt Mendy made straight for John's cell and peeped through the bars.

"Look at you," she scoffed. "A man your age that-ought-to-know-better, gettin' hisself put in jail for a carryin' on disgraceful with that no-count red-headed strumpet of a Julie Burns. You—you— Why, you ain't fit to tech the hem of my skirts."

"Why, hello, Aunt Mendy," John said, surprised and real pleased-like. "Who told you I was in here?"

"Ain't nobody told me. I come down to see about gettin' these boys outa here and I find you. I'm a good notion to leave you here till you rot, too, that's what I'm a notion to do."

"Why, Aunt Mendy," John said, mildly reproachful. "I ain't done nothin'. Honest I ain't. I jest took a little too much applejack, maybe."

"Humph! A little too much applejack, huh? I reckon you gonna tell tell me next you spent that whole forty dollars you had this mornin' on applejack. I reckon you gonna tell me that?"

"No," John said. "Fact is, Aunt Mendy, I got in a crap game."

Aunt Mendy was so mad now it took John and Bob and the jailer all three talking to her before they could quiet her down. It took them several minutes. Finally, though, Aunt Mendy gave in. "Well, I hope you men'll have at least enough decency to turn your faces while I see if I got any money on me," Aunt Mendy said. She stepped down the hall a ways. When she came back she was counting out bills. "This is for the three of 'em," Aunt Mendy said. "The big feller there—his mammy can pay his fine, she's got plenty money."

Before we left John walked over in front of Dorcey's cell. He winked at Bob. "This is tough, Dorcey. I hate to leave you like this," John said. "If I had any money on me I'd pay your fine myself."

"That's all right," Dorcey said. "You just stop in on your way home and tell Mamma, will you, John?"

"Of course I will, Dorcey," John promised. "I'll go home early and tell 'er that."

Bob and I were so tickled to be outside again we didn't stop to say anything. The sun hadn't quite set yet. The air smelled nice. It smelled of coming night.

Aunt Mendy led us out to where John's Ford was parked beside the courthouse. There under the steering wheel sat Miss Hallie. And beside her was her cousin.

"We drove Aunt Mendy in from the picnic grounds when the sheriff came and told her about Mr. Eskew," Miss Hallie said.

John looked at Bob and me and winked. Aunt Mendy wouldn't look at anybody. She was still mad about having to pay out all that money. Just as we were climbing into the Ford, John reached into his pocket and

held something out to Aunt Mendy. "Aunt Mendy, I shore thank you for the loan of that thirty bucks," John said.

Aunt Mendy stared at the three ten dollar bills. "What's this monkey business? I thought you told me you'd been in a crap game, John Eskew?"

John grinned. "Well, I did, Aunt Mendie. But you wouldn't give me a chance to explain that instead of *losin'* forty bucks I *won* myself forty bucks."

Aunt Mendy's indignant hand closed over the bills. "You mean to sit there and tell me you got eighty dollars on you, John Eskew?"

"Not quite eighty. I bought the widder's dinner. And the applejack cost me a little somethin'."

"But—how come, then, you didn't pay your fine yourself?"

" I was just a comin' to that. Fact is, Aunt Mendy, I reckon I must 'ave took too *much* of that applejack. Least wise, I didn't know I *was* in jail until these boys come in and woke me up a while ago."

Aunt Mendy was mad again. Only this time she didn't have any words. She just sat there, blinking.

"We'll pay you back for our fines, John," Bob promised vaguely.

"Forget it, boys," John waved his hand, airily, and bit at a plug of tobacco. "Easy come, easy go."

No one mentioned anything about Dorcey.

"Have you all ate supper yet, Miss Hallie?" Bob asked politely.

"Not yet," Miss Hallie said. "We were just starting in while ago when Aunt Mendy stopped us to drive her down here."

Bob said, "It would be right nice if we could all eat together."

Miss Hallie was driving. We were nearing the picnic grounds now. She almost hit a passing peanut vender. "Oh, it would," said Miss Hallie.

Miss Hallie had been having to look back when she talked. That was because Bob was sitting on the back seat with John and Aunt Mendy. I was up front seated next to Miss Hallie's cousin. No one had thought to introduce us yet. But that didn't matter. Miss Hallie's cousin looked at me now and smiled. "Do you know how to dance?" she asked me.

She was even prettier up closer. Her eyes were grey. Every time I looked into them I felt goose pimples. I looked into them now. "Oh, yes indeed," I said. "I'm *crazy* about dancing."

THE EVE OF CONFLICT: 1914-1936

Bernadotte E. Schmitt

THE TENSE situation now existing in Europe is widely interpreted as signifying the approach to a new war. Consequently an analysis of the position on the eve of 1914 is bound to be of exceptional interest, for although it is rash to assert that history repeats itself, the present situation does bear some resemblance to that of twenty-five years ago. The powers are divided into opposing groups, there is a feverish competition in armaments reminiscent of 1913, and everywhere pessimism is the order of the day.

Most of the authoritative books on the origins of the War of 1914 have been written by professors. Their approach has been by way of the official diplomatic correspondence made available since the war through the opening of archives and the memoirs of politicians, diplomatists, generals, and admirals, and this voluminous material they have explored and exploited to the last detail. With varying degrees of success they have overcome their national prejudices and sought the truth. But few of them have had any practical experience of politics or diplomacy or any personal acquaintance with the actors in the tragedy of 1914. Many must have felt, as has the present writer, that after reading all the documents and all the memoirs, their writing was somewhat academic and removed from reality precisely because it was so impersonal.

If this is so, then the book of Theodor Wolff* is sure of welcome; for Herr Wolff, as the Paris correspondent and later the editor of a great Ber-

**The Eve of 1914.* By Theodor Wolff [Editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, 1906-33]. Translated from the German by E. W. Dickes. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1936. $4.50.

lin newspaper, was for long years in the thick of politics and knew not only the principal German statesmen but also many abroad. As a practical newspaperman he had to take account of personal ambitions, jealousies, and idiosyncracies and to discover those imponderables of political life which are often more important than concrete issues. This rich experience is constantly reflected in his book, which can be described as primarily a study in the interplay of personalities, and in its vivid pages William I and his myrmidons, Nicholas II and his entourage, and a host of others appear as men of flesh and blood who live with gusto and quarrel with relish and are moved by strictly mundane considerations, not as automata or pieces on a chessboard. The historians are prone to represent the war as caused by the conflict of jealous nationalisms and rival imperialisms, the burden of armaments, and the schism of Europe into two opposing diplomatic groups. Herr Wolff duly mentions these sources of discord from time to time, but as a European he does not feel that they require elucidation, for they are inherent in the European tradition. For him the War was rather the result of human error and fallibility, and might have been avoided had there been more rigorous thinking and less devotion to shibboleths, more honest facing of the risks and less fatalism. Thus, while severely critical of Prince Bülow, whose maladroitness was largely responsible for Germany's unhappy situation, Herr Wolff believes that the Prince would have avoided in 1914 the fatal mistakes which proved Germany's undoing. In short, his thesis is that the War was not inevitable, but that Europe drifted into war because those in the seats of power were not strong enough or wise enough to think through the steps by which rising animosities might be appeased and existing differences might be compromised.

The Eve of 1914 is an accurate title. The book deals with the years immediately preceding the war, beginning practically with the appointment of Bethmann Hollweg as German Chancellor in 1909. (In 1925 Herr Wolff published *Das Vorspiel* [The Prelude] which deals with the Bülow régime.) The larger part of it is devoted to a study of German policy, the subject that the author knows best, but there are sections on Austria-Hungary, Russia, France, and Great Britain; Italy receives only slight attention and Turkey comes in only incidentally. If it is not a full-dress and well-

balanced survey of the pre-War years, it is nonetheless a highly interesting analysis, brilliantly written and conceived in an objective spirit, and the translation is well done. Even the most hardened student of the origins of the War will find fresh points of view and stimulating suggestions. On the other hand, it needs some familiarity with the issues discussed for the reader to appreciate fully the quality of the argument, for the treatment is often allusive rather than direct, and the chronology of events is not always adhered to strictly. This, however, will not concern Germans, for whom the book was first published in 1934 under the title, *Der Krieg des Pontius Pilatus* [The war of Pontius Pilate].

For the outbreak of the European War in 1914, Herr Wolff holds the Russian military party, the Grand Duke Nicholas and Generals Yanushkevich and Sukhomlinov, immediately responsible, for it was they who forced the weak and unwilling Tsar Nicholas II into ordering mobilization. This is a natural position for a German to take, and Herr Wolff takes it with less vehemence than many of his compatriots. For the rest, his book might have been written by an Englishman or an American of mildly "revisionist" tendencies. The anarchical conditions in the Hapsburg monarchy and the reckless policy of Conrad von Hötzendorf and Count Berchtold are flayed with the verve of a Wickham Steed or a Seton-Watson. The notion that the Serbian premier Pashich was secretly working in coöperation with the "Black Hand" against Austria-Hungary is rejected on the ground that Pashich was much too clever a politician to tie up with a military group which was trying to oust him from power.

French chauvinism is examined in considerable detail and with telling effect; the interesting point is made that it was patronized by some of the greatest French writers, whereas no distinguished German intellectual associated himself with the Pan-German group. Yet the French elections of 1914 showed, says Herr Wolf, that "the wave of nationalism was no more than a surface agitation"; "the general atmosphere was such that even shrewd German observers regarded the chances of war as virtually non-existent." Towards Poincaré Herr Wolff is quite respectful; without accepting all the Frenchman's asseverations of innocence, he refrains from absurd charges of Machiavellian scheming to bring on war. "A man of his type does not deliberately want and work for war, but may con-

tinually dwell on the idea of the inevitability of war until at last he firmly believes in it, and then, in order not to fail through inadequate preparations, chooses a path 'in case of emergency' which even without an emergency is full of danger."

Sir Edward Grey is mildly criticized: "He had the urge to honesty in politics . . . and was certainly exceedingly uncomfortable if he had said or done anything that was not entirely in consonance with his moral principles . . . unfortunately he had not the strength to be entirely the man of his ideal." Grey was for peace, but worked for it only on special occasions. "In the days when the danger of war was not acute he let matters slide." But in July, 1914, he was "the only one who came out into the open and publicly addressed the nations and their governments" in behalf of peace. But though Herr Wolff laments that Grey's attitude towards Germany was not sympathetic, he does not, like some German writers, seek to explain that attitude by Grey's dependence on his advisers, Sir Arthur Nicolson and Sir Eyre Crowe. The latter is not even mentioned. Nicolson was undoubtedly hostile to Germany, but Grey's private secretary, Tyrell, advocated an understanding. The truth was that the British government had no well-defined, firm foreign policy, and its attitude was determined largely by the conduct of Germany.

These judgments of Herr Wolff on Germany's opponents are interesting, not merely on their merit, but also because they are essential to his argument that Germany was not solely responsible for the War. As a matter of fact, few well-informed persons now assert that the Imperial German Government deliberately plotted war in 1914. What can be contended, however, is (1) that the conduct of German policy in the years before 1914 created a deep suspicion that Germany cherished far-reaching ambitions which could be satisfied only through war, and that Germany was prepared to go to war for this purpose when the moment seemed favorable; and (2) that in July, 1914, it was the action of Germany which caused the European crisis (for without German support Austria would never have dared to proceed as she did against Serbia) and which prevented a peaceful solution of the crisis. The point is the distinction between *dolus,* or deliberate intent, and *culpa,* or negligence, in varying degree. By and large, this point of view finds ample confirmation in Herr Wolff's book,

which, if written to demonstrate that Germany was not solely responsible, is addressed to his own countrymen to explain to them why in other countries the belief is still widely held that Germany was primarily responsible.

Our author's verdict on his own country is certainly devastating. First of all, he recognizes that, on the one hand, William II, who always posed as the supreme authority in Germany, and on the other hand, the Pan-Germans, who made up by noise what they lacked in authority, created abroad the worst possible impression of German policy and aims, the Emperor by his threatening speeches, the Pan-Germans by their vaunting ambitions. Very properly he records the violent language of Maximilian Harden, the vagaries of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, and the popularity of General von Bernhardi in officers' messes and some conservative families. As for the poor Emperor, Herr Wolff thinks that he was much misunderstood, and this is probably true. In spite of his innumerable belligerent outbursts, both in public utterances and on the margin of documents, plenty of which are quoted at length, Herr Wolff believes that at heart William II was a man of peace; that he talked and dreamed of war only when it was far away or when it was most improbable. The moment the gates of war threatened actually to open for Germany, William was all for peace. Herr Wolff will have it that this was true even in the winter of 1913-14, when the records reveal the Emperor as much more bellicose than in previous years. Even in July, 1914, when he gave *carte blanche* to the Austrians, he did not expect Russia to intervene. It may be so, but Herr Wolff recognizes that the Emperor was playing with fire and that abroad the Emperor was inevitably judged by what he said and what he did, not by what he may have felt in his innermost conscience. It was the misfortune of Germany not merely to have so unstable a ruler but also to lack any means of controlling his erratic conduct. William II may have had the best and the most pacific intentions, but he did not act up to them. It is not to be denied that he was opposed from first to last to the Moroccan policy of his government, a policy which gave the Anglo-French Entente life and being; that he condemned the annexation of Bosnia and the Austrian veto of a Serbian port on the Adriatic, an act which did so much to accentuate Austro-Russian hostility; in every case, however, he yielded to the pressure of his ministers and must therefore bear the responsibility for what

happened, all the more so because he always paraded his own power and authority. But on one matter William was adamant: the fleet. The Foreign Office realized the great danger inherent in the naval rivalry with Great Britain and was anxious for an understanding; but Tirpitz refused to make any substantial concession and was sustained by the Emperor. Since there was no cabinet in the German system, the Chancellor could not protest by tendering the resignation of the government, and the Reichstag was powerless. The Emperor's willfullness is further illustrated by his treatment of certain ambassadors. He recalled Metternich from London, where he was much appreciated, because he had had the courage to advocate an Anglo-German naval understanding; on the other hand, the Emperor insisted on keeping Tschirschky at Vienna, although the Chancellor and the Foreign Office were thoroughly dissatisfied with him.

In such circumstances it is not surprising that German policy never steered a steady course and was regarded abroad as incalculable and provocative. According to Herr Wolff, however, the fault did not lie entirely with the system, or the lack of it. Bethmann Hollweg was unacquainted with foreign policy, but soon convinced himself that he understood it thoroughly and refused to take advice. Kiderlen, by his tactics in the Agadir crisis of 1911, confirmed all the worst suspicions of German aggressiveness. Jagow, his successor, was a nonentity. Lichnowsky, who followed Metternich in London, was disliked because he reported that in the event of war Great Britain would support France; he believed that he was deliberately "double-crossed" by his superiors. Herr Wolff picks out for special denunciation the decision of Bethmann and Kiderlen to support Austria's veto on a Serbian port: the clever policy would have been to let Serbia have the port, because this would have led to sharp antagonism between Serbia and Italy and diverted Serbia's attention from Austria. The mission of Liman von Sanders is also sharply criticized.

These blunders were, however, small in comparison with the *carte blanche* given to Austria in July, 1914. Herr Wolff bitterly points out that this question was settled by the Emperor and the Chancellor without consulting anyone in the course of a brief conversation, and he rejects altogether the conventional arguments that Germany had no alternative but to support her ally. There was no danger of losing Austria because that

state had nowhere else to turn. Herr Wolff's conversations with Foreign Office officials on the eve of the rupture between Austria and Serbia suggest that the idea of a preventive war with Russia was not altogether unwelcome; he throws doubt on the sincerity of Bethmann's first efforts to restrain Austria; and he cannot see why Sazonov's compromise formula was summarily rejected. No effort is made to explain away Moltke's pressure for war, and the German declarations of war are roundly condemned. It is evident that Herr Wolff's analysis of the crisis is very different from that of most German writers. On only one point has he fallen into error. He complained that the text of the Serbian reply to the Austrian ultimatum was withheld by the Vienna war lords until too late. Actually, the reply was communicated to the German Foreign Office at noon on July 27, and was withheld from the Emperor and the German public until the following day.

The other governments are not exonerated for everything done or not done during the crisis. The Austrian ultimatum is condemned; Sazonov's disingenuous conduct is exposed, as well as that of Paléologue, the French Ambassador in St. Petersburg. Herr Wolff thinks that both France and Great Britain might have done more to restrain Russia, and he pictures the soldiers of both countries straining at the leash. An intriguing suggestion is that Grey's proposal of a conference, which Herr Wolff approves, may have caused Russia to speed up her plans for mobilization. Nevertheless, at the end of the book, one is conscious that Herr Wolff has delivered a formidable indictment of his country. He quotes a remark of Alberto Pansa, onetime Italian Ambassador in Berlin: "Herr von Bethmann and his colleagues were far less criminal than Germany's enemies assert, and a thousand times more foolish than people imagine." *Quantula sapientia orbis regitur?*

In 1919 there was a general desire to reduce and limit armaments, for the responsibility for the outbreak of war in 1914 was commonly put upon the soldiers (on the German general staff, in the Allied view; on the Russian generals, according to the German). Alliances had also fallen into wide disfavor because it was the almost automatic operation of the pre-War alliances which had converted a local (Austro-Serbian) dispute into a European conflict. Unfortunately the settlements of 1919 imposed a

limitation of armaments only on the defeated powers, and the alliance system was perpetuated in the Anglo-French and Franco-American treaties which formed an integral part of the settlement. Had the United States ratified the Treaty of Versailles and joined the League of Nations, it is quite possible that the Allies would have proceeded to limit their armaments while the special alliances with France would have gradually lost their significance as American adherence gave vitality to the Covenant. As things turned out, the defection of the United States led France to maintain her armaments and to seek alliances in the east of Europe, and some of the Succession states—Czecho-Slovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania—did the same thing. Other states have also reached understandings among themselves. The most recent move of this kind is the Franco-Soviet pact negotiated in 1935 and ratified in March of this year, which, though constructed within the framework of the League of Nations, bears many resemblances to the Franco-Russian treaty of 1893.

Yet the situation in 1936 is not identical with that of 1914. Then Europe was divided into two rival camps of three powers each, and Serbia had become the pivot of the balance of power. Today there is no clear-cut line of division, at least in formal alignment. To be sure, France, the Little Entente, and the Soviet Union form one group. There is also a Balkan Entente, and more recently Austria, Hungary, and Italy have come together. But Italy's position is still uncertain and cannot be clarified until the liquidation of the Ethiopian War. Poland has an alliance with France and an understanding with Germany. Above all, Great Britain has not fully committed herself. In 1914 the powers aligned themselves logically enough, but in 1936 it is impossible to predict how they would act in the event of a grave crisis. In other words, the situation is still fluid, and what may come out of it is anybody's guess.

A second difference between present-day and pre-War Europe is that before 1914 statesmen talked glibly of peace but did little to promote it except by the adjustment of local disputes; whereas today the danger of war is frankly recognized, and constructive efforts, more or less sincere, are being made to "organize" peace. No doubt a long road has still to be traveled before "collective security" and the "indivisibility of peace" are

actually achieved, but it is surely something gained when governments universally acknowledge the necessity of such a program.

Thirdly, the advent of Hitler to power has had the effect of clearing the air somewhat. In the sixties of the last century Bismarck broke through the recognized rules of the diplomatic game and challenged the existing organization of Europe, giving contemporary statesmen many sleepless nights. So with Hitler, who has challenged the system of Versailles. Bismarck conducted his campaign indirectly and resorted to war to achieve his ends. Hitler has operated much more openly and has come forward with fairly definite proposals for a new order. Those proposals may or may not be acceptable, but they cannot be ignored. At any rate they force upon European statesmen a reëxamination of the whole position. Before 1914 only Sir Edward Grey dared envisage a new order, but he confessed that his ideas seemed utopian, and he never made specific suggestions. Is it statesmanship of the highest order or mere diabolical cleverness which has induced Hitler, who is credited with ambitions transcending those of the pre-War Pan-Germans, to make an offer of permanent peace? Only time will show, but it is to his credit that he has presented the issue squarely.

Several circumstances, however, make for a pessimistic view. The Italian war for Tripoli in 1911 led directly to the Balkan crusade against Turkey in 1912, and the outcome of this war had much to do with bringing on the general war in 1914. Is the Italian conquest of Ethiopia to be the first link in a new chain of wars? Again, the hesitations of Great Britain before 1914 gave much encouragement to restless spirits on the Continent. Unfortunately the British public seems unmindful of the lesson of 1914 and quite unable to make up its mind what course it wishes to follow. Probably nothing could do more to stabilize Europe than a clarification of the British position.

Fundamentally, however, the European problem seems almost hopeless. Two great powers—Germany and Italy—and three lesser states—Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria—are dissatisfied. In Germany and Italy there seem to be more people than can be maintained at a decent standard of living from the national resources. Obviously a greatly enhanced volume of international trade which would give employment to millions would do the trick, but of that there is scant prospect at present. The only other so-

lution is emigration, and that would have to be on a very considerable scale to afford any relief. Where can millions of Italians or Germans go, even if they were willing to go? Ethiopia will certainly not solve the Italian problem, and the recovery by Germany of her former colonies would be of little help to her. Will the British dominions or the Soviet Union admit Italians or Germans in such numbers as to reduce appreciably the pressure of population at home? The danger is that in sheer desperation Germany or Italy may strike out almost blindly and with the insouciance of a madman. Can peace be so "organized" that such an outbreak can be prevented or doomed in advance to failure?

And the United States? Since a new European war would affect our economic life profoundly by the disruption of trade, it is to our evident interest to help prevent a war. But it is not easy to discern what we can do to help. Our present policy of restoring international trade by bilateral agreements, if it assists in alleviating the economic pressure in Europe, is a step in the right direction, for economic recovery in Europe strengthens the forces of peace. In the opinion of many, a declaration by the United States that it will close its markets against an aggressor state would have a profoundly deterring influence on any government disposed to go to war. American opinion, however, is not yet ready for such a policy, and is now waiting to observe the results of the sanctions applied against Italy by the League of Nations. At the moment, about all we can do is to "wait and see," and hope for the best.

FASCISM: NEMESIS OF CIVILIZATION

Frederick L. Schuman

MANY YEARS ago George Bernard Shaw, in a provocative little volume entitled *The Perfect Wagnerite,* undertook to demonstrate with considerable persuasiveness that the music-dramas of the "Ring" trilogy were written as a subtle parody on modern capitalism. With Shavian wit and Marxian dialectical skill, the Irish playwright contended that the gold of the gods, which brought disaster to all who struggled for its possession, symbolized the acquisitive spirit of contemporary industrialism. He traced the symbolism through *Das Rheingold, Die Walküre,* and the first two acts of *Siegfried.* But then, said Shaw, Wagner forgot his social *motif* and degenerated into Italian opera in Act III and in all of *Götterdämmerung.*

Were Shaw rewriting his essay today he might well credit Wagner with more subtlety and prophetic insight even in the final phases of the Nibelung narrative. While the details of the analogy become obscured in the intricacies of the Siegfried legend, the fate of the liberating hero epitomizes the fate of liberalism in the twentieth century. Siegfried is betrayed and slain by the evil Hagen. His death brings in its wake the final destruction of Valhalla and the apocalyptic annihilation of men and gods alike. In contemporary Europe, liberal, middle-class culture, with its democratic state-forms, its faith in progress, its humanitarian ideals, and its trust in freedom, sanity, and tolerance, is in process of being slain by fascism—

Government in the Third Reich, by Fritz Morstein Marx. New York: McGraw-Hill. $1.50. *Fascism and National Socialism,* by Michael T. Florinsky. New York: Macmillan Co. $2.50. *Hitler—A Biography,* by Konrad Heiden. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.00. *Hitler,* by Rudolph Olden. New York: Covici-Friede. $3.00.

the social philosophy and the *Zeitgeist* of late capitalism. In this death, too, are the seeds of irreparable disaster and the threat of the catastrophic demise of European civilization.

This sequence of probabilities is but dimly perceived in much of the current literature on fascism. Almost twenty years ago the late Oswald Spengler, in his *Decline of the West,* predicted fascism and evaluated its social and cultural significance more accurately than most observers of today, even though Spengler himself failed to recognize the new Caesarism for what it was when it first strutted across the European stage in the early post-War years. But a definitive treatment of the cultural significance of fascism is still to be written.

Despite this circumstance, much solid and scholarly work has been done by way of describing the politics and economics of the fascist state. Among the more valuable of the recent contributions of this type is Fritz Morstein Marx's *Government in The Third Reich.* This is frankly a textbook, but for all of that it is richly deserving of William Yandell Elliott's characterization of it in his "Foreword" as "the best study of German political life under the Third Reich that has yet been offered to students." The author is a German by birth, a liberal by conviction, a former civil servant of Hamburg by profession, a scholar and writer in the field of public administration and, at present, a member of the Department of Government at Harvard. He brings to his task a vast knowledge of the German past, and an intimate familiarity with German political traditions and institutions. Seldom has a writer crowded so much useful, documented factual material and so many illuminating interpretations and comments into so few pages and at the same time maintained that easy grace of style and organization so essential for readability. The five chapters of his little volume outline successively the political background of the National-socialist Revolution, the "Constitutional Pattern of the One-Party State," the "Process of Government" (in terms of propaganda and militarization), the "Enlistment of Traditional Institutions," and "The Mobilization of the Nation."

This monograph is especially useful for its treatment of local government and administration under the Nazi dictatorship and for its succinct presentation of the theory of the *Führerstaat.* Like the Trinity, this regime

is singular and plural at the same time in that it combines people, party, and state in the person of the Leader. Dr. Marx can discover no adequate theoretical foundation for these three pillars of authority. In fact, there is none save the naked and irresponsible power exercised by the totalitarian demagogue-dictator who imposes "unlimited authority from above" and exacts "unlimited obedience from below." *"L'Etat, c'est moi!"* exclaimed Louis XIV. But in Germany unrestrained absolutism transcends itself. Hitler is the state, Hitler is the party, Hitler is the people. Dr. Marx touches briefly on the processes of self-deception and mass-hypnosis whereby millions of Germans have been persuaded to accept this myth. He does not, however, deal with the subtle interrelationships between *Der Führer* and the two elite groups of industrialists and Junkers which subsidized the party and gave it control of the Reich. These groups are still the ruling classes and are the major beneficiaries of German fascism.

One might legitimately expect the social and economic bases of totalitarian dictatorship to be uncovered in Michael T. Florinsky's *Fascism and National Socialism.* The author, an associate in economics at Columbia, has studied and traveled widely. His book, nevertheless, will prove disappointing to those seeking an adequate account of what he pretends to cover: "A Study of the Economic and Social Policies of the Totalitarian State." He presents a superficial treatment of the political origins and structure of the Italian and German fascist dictatorships and then examines the concept of the corporative state, the agencies and purposes of economic regimentation, the liquidation of class conflict, fascist agrarian policy, and the condition of German and Italian public finances and foreign trade. The narrative is undocumented and is interlarded with anecdotes and personal experiences, some of which are quite irrelevant. Dr. Florinsky's "Bibliography" is a hodgepodge of official publications, apologetic literature, and third-rate secondary accounts. His portrait of totalitarian economics is muddled and confused, partly because fascist economics *are* muddled and confused and partly because the author ignores the basic question of all economics and politics: who gets what, when, and how? Florinsky fails to analyze the power relationships and the distribution of satisfactions among social classes—and failing in this, he largely fails in his whole enterprise.

The new Caesarism with its apotheosis of the personal dictator can be studied as fruitfully in terms of personality as in terms of political and economic institutions. Two valuable new biographies of Hitler have appeared this spring, both by German exiles who have devoted much time and thought to *Der Führer*. Konrad Heiden, a liberal journalist already well known for his *History of Nationalsocialism,* has written *Hitler—A Biography,* originally published in Zurich and translated by Winifred Ray. Almost simultaneously, has been issued another biography, *Hitler,* from the pen of Rudolph Olden, formerly a political editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt* and now at Oxford. Heiden's is the more brilliant and readable volume, Olden's the more scholarly and incisive.

As a personality and a political leader, Hitler is significant and intelligible as a neurotic victim of unbearable frustrations. As a child he incorporated within himself the *fin du siècle* maladies of mind and soul which afflicted the central European *Kleinbürgertum*. Olden carefully sifts fact from legend in this childhood. Adolf's family life was disorganized, unhappy, bitter. His father was the illegitimate son of the unwed Maria Anna Schiklgruber. This Alois retained his mother's name until the age of forty ("Heil Schiklgruber!", suggests Olden, would be more accurate but less effective than "Heil Hitler!") when he adopted the name of Hitler from a miller, Johannes Georg Hietler, who may have been his father. Alois, father of *Der Führer,* was a petty Austrian official whose married life was adventurous. "Three wives, seven children, one divorce, one birth before marriage, two shortly after the wedding, one wife fourteen years older than himself, and another twenty-three years younger—that is saying a good deal for a Customs officer." Little Adolf was the son of the youngest wife, Klara Pölzl. As a boy he hated his father, did badly in school, and when left an orphan, became a vagabond. His compensations later took the form of reverence for a morality and family life he had never known, envy and hatred for scholarship and erudition of which he was incapable, and worship of order, authority, and the bourgeois virtues which he could never quite attain.

His subsequent life is the story of other overcompensations for deficiencies which he could neither recognize nor accept. He sought to become an artist and architect, and failed. He sought to enter the world of cosmo-

politan Viennese culture and failed. He strove for economic security and independence and was forced by poverty to become a workingman. He came to hate workers with a passionate hatred. He came to detest cosmopolitan culture. He detested Austria, liberalism, internationalism, Freemasonry, socialism, and all forms of freedom. Anti-Semitism and the myth of the "Jewish World Conspiracy" linked all his hatreds into a crazy system. In 1914, in Munich, he volunteered in the German army, hailing the War as a joyous release from penury and boredom. In 1918 his adopted Fatherland collapsed and he with it. This trauma left him twisted, tortured, frantic, delirious with rage against the supposed authors of disaster. Like other wounded and broken men, he came to worship the hell of war which had broken and wounded him. Millions of his compatriots suffered from like disorders. To the neuroses of the frustrated pre-War *Kleinbürgertum* were added the neuroses of a lost generation of youth, of an army in dissolution, of a nation in defeat, of multitudes of frenzied little men reduced to madness by war, poverty, inflation, depression, and general cultural decadence. As Heiden puts it, "A foundered man and a foundered nation formed an alliance."

Fascism as a mass movement is always the expression of the neurotic insecurities of lower middle-class people. Hitler, like Mussolini, is the symbol and embodiment of these insecurities. But fascism, as a dictatorial state-form, is created by a conspiracy of monopolistic industrialists and monopolistic agrarian aristocrats, aided by professional militarists and by self-seeking politicians. These people, too, are victims of neurotic insecurities bred of war and depression. Hitler, like Mussolini, was raised to power by Big Business, the landed nobility, and part of the army. In this process of decay, the masses flee from reality into fantasy, megalomania, intolerance, mysticism, and infantilism. The classes subsidize and place in the seats of power a demagogue-dictator who promises to smash Marxism, destroy the trade unions and the coöperatives, enslave labor, and clear the way for the monopolistic exploitation of the masses, who have simultaneously been promised "socialism," a workers' state, the nationalization of trusts, the municipalization of department stores, the division of the landed estates, and the "breaking of the bonds of interest slavery." Once in power the dictator must obey the classes who control money, indus-

try, land, and the army. The masses are betrayed, disillusioned, impoverished. They must be hypnotized by propaganda, frightened by terrorism, and distracted from their miseries by the domestic persecution of scapegoats and by frantic preparations for foreign war. The end of this unholy alliance is inevitably economic and social disaster, from which the fascist state seeks to save itself by imperialistic aggression against its neighbors.

The personality of *Der Führer* is to a unique degree the incarnation of these insecurities, tensions, dualisms, and dilemmas. Although neither Heiden nor Olden employ the terminology of psychiatry, their portraits are sufficiently rich and colorful to reveal in this weird Messiah the symptoms of paranoia and schizophrenia. The outlines of psychosis emerge from the mystery of Hitler's private life and from the hysterical exaltation of his public appearances. Heiden's chapter on "Women," which precipitated a libel suit in Paris, implies that Hitler is sexually normal but love-hungry and *hörig*. Olden more shrewdly perceives something amiss here and traces Hitler's anti-Semitism to sexual inferiority and envy. He further exposes the numerous lies, large and petty, in *Mein Kampf* and shows their psychic origins. His delineation of *Der Führer's* character is finely executed, even though something dark and strange in this man's being remains elusive and forbidding. In the place of Mussolini's cheap acting and bombast, there are in Hitler the bitter dregs of denial and abnegation, the mad artistry of pageantry, the wild, compulsive lust-for-power which springs from impotence, the masochistic and sadistic delirium which flows from the tortured spirit of a man, a class, a nation—all gone half-insane.

This madness is at once the consequence of the breakdown of civilization which began in 1914 and the instrument through which the remnants of liberalism and the battered fragments of Western culture on the European continent will in all probability be submerged in anarchy and barbarism during the 1940's. The cultural content of fascism admits of no debate: intolerance, recklessness, and brutality; infantilism, impoverishment, war. In *Mein Kampf,* writes Olden, "Hitler wears his heart on his sleeve. He speaks with open contempt of nauseatingly humane morality. He calls so-called humanity the expression of a mixture of stupidity, cowardice and imaginary superiority. Time and again he praises brutal vio-

lence and barbaric ruthlessness. There can be no doubt about what attracts him."

In another passage, Olden observes:

> Since the Great War there have not been many convinced adherents of Western civilization. The tremendous distress which has come over the world with the disruption of international coöperation and the destruction of world trade has made the majority of mankind restless, disturbed, ill at ease. The further society drew away from the fundamentals of Christianity, from peace, from love for one's neighbor, from charity, the more receptive became its members to new doctrines and new faiths. Hitler's battle-cry, "victory to the strong and subjection or annihilation to the weak," is a declaration of war against the basis of our intellectual and moral existence.

Olden hopes that Western mankind will resist and halt this "crude, wild, outrageous attack on humanity." But his optimism is scarcely warranted. The time for action has passed. Heiden asserts, quite correctly: "Hitler is not a man with whom a reasonable being concludes an agreement; he is a phenomenon which one slays or is slain by." But the Western democracies conclude agreements and make bargains (no sooner made than broken) with both *Il Duce* and *Der Führer*. They recoil in fear and trembling before the diplomacy of the *fait accompli,* before the violence of glorified banditry and bloodshed. Pacts and admonitions avail nothing before this phenomenon. In the apt phrase of E. Palme Dutt, fascism is the "organization of social decay." Fascism, also, is war. Fascism prepares Armageddon.

> One is reminded [writes Olden] of a Moloch whose fiery maw consumes victim upon victim. He has swallowed freedom of thought and speech, the Reichstag, the workers' societies. The nation's prosperity is gone, and every day its food becomes scarcer. Justice is at low ebb; neither science nor the churches can flourish under State constraint. Mind and matter alike smolder in the belly of the pitiless god. All is sacrificed to the army.

One fascist army has plundered and destroyed the last independent kingdom of Africa and broken the will of a brave but defenceless people

with tanks, bombing planes, and poison gas. Another fascist army, north of the Alps, grows month by month and comes ever closer to the hour of assault when fascism will seek release from bankruptcy in the bloody catharsis of mass murder on a colossal scale. The barriers against catastrophe are one by one falling. In Geneva, Paris, Prague, London there is neither foresight nor leadership but only timidity, anxiety, futile fear, and indignation. Nothing can avert the onward march of the legions of fascist aggression save an international system of collective security in which the nations still committed to peace and sanity are prepared to run the risks of prompt and effective military sanctions against international law-breakers. But Britain and France, and still more America, are wholly unprepared to pay the price of peace. The West has muddled and fumbled, vacillated and yielded in the face of every fascist threat and bluff. The League of Nations is dead as an instrumentality for the prevention of war. Geneva is a sepulchre of lost opportunities and dead hopes.

Das Zeitalter der Verantwortunglosigkeit is the name which Konrad Heiden gives to our age in the subtitle of the original Zurich edition of his book: "The Epoch of Irresponsibility." From irresponsibility will come irreparable disaster. Out of the wreckage of the second imperialistic world war which fascism makes inevitable will come the world revolution dreamed of by Moscow—or a new Dark Age. Which is the more probable, no one can now say. All that is certain is the vast, tragic uncertainty of a world-shattering explosion and a bloody descent into chaos.

SYMBOLIC WAR

Kenneth Burke

Poetry, I take it, is a matter of welfare—as religion and politics are matters of welfare. And welfare, in this imperfect world, is grounded in material necessities. Even if we chose to deny these material necessities, starving or being slain in behalf of some cause, our self-abnegatory act would still be grounded in material necessities. The "material basis of reference" is as strong in the acts of those who would flout it as in the behavior of any businessman who treats financial profit and spiritual profit as interchangeable terms. It is in this sense that believe in the priority of economic factors. Some have said challengingly, and some bitterly, what Aristotle said as a matter of course: that people live together for their greater advantage. The problems of congregation center about the problems of wealth, derived from the means of production and defense. Where the available means of production and defense are ample, poverty or loss can only arise from some disorder in the modes of congregation. The dispossessed man is in a different "environment" from the man who enjoys the fruits of the society's wealth. He has a different "relation to the productive forces." And in so far as this situation sharpens his fears, hopes, and conflicts, it helps to condition his "morality."

Thus do such matters as wealth, morality, poetry, environment, production, and congregation tend to become intertwined, shaping a point of view, making for "partisans" in so far as different relationships become simplified as consciousness of "class."

However, to have pursued our speculations as far as the matter of "class-consciousness" is to realize that the relation between the "economic substructure" and the "moral superstructure" is lacking in the symmetry of one-to-one correspondences. We can belong in as many classifications as scientists or philosophers care to invent. Though a radical paper is written for a different "class" than a conservative one, we may have heard complaints from the *contributors* to radical papers which would suggest that, to them, the *editors* of the radical paper often seem to be in the same "class" as the editors of the conservative paper. Their most intimate connection with a "class war" may be in the war between the *editor* class and the *contributor* class—and it can be a very bitter one, waged behind the lines at a moment when battles on a wider front are being fought.

Again, our "economic environment" is not wholly historical. At any given time in history, we have specific relationships to the forces of production (tools and weapons) accumulated by our society. But there is another "economic plant," the resources of the body itself, the *biologic* tools and weapons, with *their* "superstructural" counterparts (intelligence, love, hate, desire for mobility, etc.). We might call this a "human" environment or situation, wider than any given historic environment. Here enters the possibility of cultural overlap, whereby a "proletarian" may find much in common with the "late feudal" or "early bourgeois" Shakespeare.

The presence of this "human" environment, the "natural" frame of reference that is wider than the "historical," may be discussed as the tendency of the poet to "transcend" the peculiar economic necessities of his times. Not even a fish could be said to live in a totally different environment from man. The "moralities" of man and fish must tend to overlap, destroying the symmetry of complete differentiation, in so far as both "classes" live by respiration and locomotion. A happy translator might do a fairly reputable job at turning a fish's delight in gills and fins into a glorification of lungs and legs.

Many of the recent literary battles hinge about this issue. The oversimplifying advocate of "proletarian" art would stress the historic environment to the exclusion of all else (and would then invent all sorts of subterfuges and epicycles to explain a liking he might have for Dante or Aeschylus, perhaps finally deciding that they were "workers" in their field).

And the oversimplifying advocate of the universally human would lay all emphasis upon the continuity of "man's burden" throughout the ages, as he incessantly confronts the critical events of birth, growth, love, union, separation, initiation, sorrow, fear, death, and the like.

In sum: we live by the goring of the ox (or some equivalent victim, be it only a vegetable). Call this relationship the biological, the universal-human, that attains its replica in the syntheses of ideology and morals ("imagination"). But it also makes a difference *whose* ox is gored. Call this relationship the historical, the partisan, making for "consciousness" in so far as the partisans tend to think of themselves as a "class" ("propaganda," "rhetoric," the "producing of effects"). As so stated, might not some of the issues dissolve? Might we not suspect that, unless men were brutes or gods (and Aristotle reminds us that they are not either) they must inevitably exemplify imagination and propaganda both? Or, to employ another trope: the nonpartisan, imaginative poet writes, "Beware, a storm approacheth." As propagandist he adds, "Go thou, and buy rubbers." The critics of the "proletarian" school (in tune with the *Zweck im Recht* analysis of law) have done us a service in recalling how often the poet, in this imperfect world, is in effect writing, "Go thou, and buy rubbers" when he is only *aware* of writing, "A storm approacheth." In the mere act of warning us what to beware of, he suggests the kind of measures to be taken.

There is also the problem of "leads." Philosophies are thinking machines—and like machines, they are frightfully "efficient." Their efficiency makes particularly for extremes in the placing of emphasis. And the proletarians, even the least intellectual of them, are philosophers. Their philosophy (the philosophy of the "class struggle") gives them "leads." And it is obvious that "leads" can on occasion *mislead*. By giving us so quickly and persuasively certain important clues as to the nature of "experience," they can incidentally prevent us from noticing other clues. In particular, those of their readers who follow other leads may sometimes find their work impoverished and "unreal," by reason of misplaced emphases. Indeed, in so far as the privileged can hire men to gore the ox for their benefit, the privileged may even afford to be above this despicable matter entirely. And they can resent the low-mindedness of those who would go

back over a territory that they have happily left behind. I would answer them by quoting Goethe's admonition, that "no one walks unpunished beneath palms." Even were there no acute social issues, even if we had, here and now, an ideal "classless society," with communal property upon which to build a communality of morals (as in the monastic orders of the early Church) I should suspect that a people could forget the goring of the ox only at their peril. The neglect would be an act of pride; and pride is the basic sin not only of the Church, but of the universe. Pride: "that state of mind that goes before a fall"—the "assumption that one can walk unpunished beneath palms"—the "failure to remind oneself that all blessings are mixed blessings." The monastic orders were framed to guard against it; hence their great emphasis upon the *moral* effect of lowly occupations. A monastic order would deteriorate in proportion as the admonitions of its founder came to be forgotten, "alienation" arising as some men were "released" from too immediate concerns with the goring of the ox, which somehow got gored, while they could turn to nobler matters, and of a sudden you find the order corrupt.

As Mr. John Crowe Ransom has wisely admonished us, there is a disturbing contemporary tendency to imagine God after the analogy of central heating and dental anesthetics. He resents this cult of a deity that is merely a celestial version of "all modern conveniences." He has asked for a Jehovah, a God of wrath, a God *with thunder*. And I have paradoxically asked myself whether the "proletarian" school, for all its atheistic trappings, might come very close to meeting his requirements. Merely put "history" in place of "Jehovah"—and anger, vengeance, lamentation once again come to the fore. History, in the proletarian code, is a just God, a jealous God, a wrathful God. Only at their peril can men violate its commandments. It rewards, with the rewards of a good conscience, those that give it strict obedience and glorify its prowess. But as for those that sin against it, attempting to maintain human laws in opposition to its laws, it wreaks its vengeance upon them, even unto the children of the third and fourth generation.

Thus, I should not advise one to take the atheistic trappings at their face value. Why be sidetracked if, by a mere shifting of vocabulary, a new word causes to live again a pattern of thought that had been obscured by

an old word? The morality of toil was ingrained in Hebraicism. It renewed its vigor in Catholicism after the collapse of pagan Rome, an elegant world that pined away in proportion as its cultured elements became psychologically unemployed ("leisured"). But Catholicism in turn eventually ran into difficulties. Surely it is not an accident that the last monastic order before the collapse (the Franciscans), an order that just missed being anathematized as a heresy, attempted to counteract the new difficulties of work by making a vocation of the *mendicant* (somewhat as we today sometimes attempt so to manipulate our fictions that unemployment itself can be turned into a profession). In keeping with the nostalgia and mystic vision of *Piers Plowman,* new vents for human effort were found through Protestantism (particularly in the new vein that could be tapped by the Calvinistic sanctions upon credit and investment). And when this solution in turn has floundered of its "inner contradictions," we find the morality of toil reborn in the emphases of socialism. It holds that there can be no leisure without decay. Were every material want to be satisfied, people could live as moral beings (without pride) only by developing *subtler* concepts of necessity. In a civilization of mechanical slaves, for instance, they might revert to Grecian concepts of effort. They might focus their attention upon the ultimate task, the development of the "perfect citizen" (shaped for the playing of his rôle as member of a collectivity). But that too would be toil—and if the toil were avoided, the God of wrath, speaking through history, would once more pronounce his curse, and the proud architecture of the State would crumble.

It is for such good reasons, I think, that this new literary movement devotes particular attention to the poignancy of unemployment, and of employment under conditions of intolerable conflict. Turning to the works themselves,* you will unquestionably find such subjects painfully overstressed. The strike, the lock-out, bad working conditions, the witting or unwitting agents of "exploitation," the physical and mental rigors of joblessness, the *organizing* of protest (whereby the forces of anger and anguish may not be allowed to follow their natural chaotic bent, but may be

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directed into rational, socially useful channels of expression)—a continual harping upon such grim themes is bothersome to us, in so far as we have been taught that we have a *right* to anesthesia. And this reviewer admits that, but for the nature of his task, he would not have read the book continuously, but would have turned to it now and then, wisely interspersing it with material more in the "glorification of the American girl" tradition. I know of one critic who, though avowedly "proletarian" in his sympathies, read the anthology while convalescing in a hospital, and developed such a "blockage" that he has not been able to review it at all. Lamentations may be more gratifying to write than to read.

Our resistance, particularly to the work of the less imaginative contributors, is justified for another reason. They are not able to "transcend" the partisan "leads" supplied by their philosophy. Their philosophy makes them quick to recognize a *propaganda situation,* and they proceed with great efficiency to build a work that emphasizes it. In fact, they become so intent upon the emphasizing of the *situation,* that they overlook the *humane* development of character. Their characters are formed in haphazard fashion, for the specific partisan purpose at hand, like the distortions of a political cartoonist. Hence, if the situation itself is burdensome to the reader, there may be nothing else in the work by which the writer can cajole him. One may hypothetically picture the two opposite procedures: that of the "partisan" writer, who begins by discovering a "propaganda situation," and proceeds to exploit it by inventing characters to fit; and in contrast, there is the "imaginative" writer, who might begin with an attachment to some very appealing character, and in the course of depicting him, might show him at work in some propaganda situation, such as the harboring of a labor leader hunted by vigilantes. Ultimately, there need be nothing at odds between the two approaches: an expression that is not truncated will encompass both. But if the partisan factor is emphasized with too much greed, it may lead to schematization of character, with nothing of appeal in so far as the situation itself lacks appeal.

An extreme instance of this is Philip Stevenson's story, "Death of a Century." Some of Stevenson's stories in the old *American Caravan,* prior to his "efficient" development of the partisan approach, were very appealing in the subtlety of their humaneness. But here he attempts to project,

through an entire piece, a feeling people sometimes experience when seeing pictures and hearing stories of Rockefeller in extreme old age. He imagines a fabulously wealthy capitalist, now in his dotage, a living mummy surviving for a time after a successful revolution in the United States. Venomously, literal in his settling of scores, the author attempts to wreak symbolic vengeance upon his villain by picturing him as a victim of both revolution and old age. Not only is the result childishly repellent in the simplicity of its wish-fulfillments. It is so naïvely partisan that it defeats its purpose as partisanship. One grows indignant at the author's treatment of senility. In trying to discredit capitalism by identifying it with a decrepit old man, he quite unintentionally reminds us that no social change can remove the pathetic feebleness of age—and the more vengeful he becomes, the sorrier we feel for the scapegoat of his vengeance. Thus, the character is thin at best, and in so far as it takes on fullness, it does so at the expense of the propagandistic purpose.

There is a compensatory feature of the "propaganda situation" that should be noted, however. Whereas, in its overemphasis, it can serve as imaginative restriction, it does contribute one virtue to even the least pretentious contributions in the book. For I think that the strong sense of the propaganda situation is linked with the strong sense of an *audience* one gets when reading this anthology. This literature is written *to* people, or *for* people. It is *addressed*.

So much by way of introduction. The volume is compendious, and uneven. Yet perhaps we should single out for comment some of the more representative texts.

Robert Cantwell's story, "Hills Around Centralia," is a good example of a crucial propaganda situation embodied imaginatively. It is based upon the poignancy of the Crucifixion theme (the "benefactor" persecuted as "malefactor"). Irony of clashing moralities. The author "weights" his material propagandistically by showing us, first, the morality of the vigilantes in action, and then slowly widening our conception of the total scene by a sympathetic portrait of the strikers. Tactfully, he permits us to see how the interests of the vigilantes have led them to misinterpret the nature of a riot, while their grip upon the channels of education and publicity serves to shape "neutral" opinion in their favor. The two opposing worlds

(of vigilantes and strikers) are eventually "synthesized" by a bridge device, being brought together when some impressionable boys, who had been bewilderedly subjected to the vigilante views, come upon two strikers hiding in the woods (overtones of the "little child shall lead them" theme). The author's choice of sides is made atop the ironic, the relativistic—hence, "propaganda" in the fullest sense, because profoundly humane. Strict "proletarian" morality could not be so "shifty." It would be pitted squarely against the enemy. But the farthest-reaching *propaganda* (as a device for appealing to the enemy, and not merely organizing his opposition by the goads of absolute antithesis) requires the more ambiguous talents of the diplomat (who talks to an alien camp in behalf of his own camp).

The excerpt from Jack Conroy's novel, *The Disinherited,* reveals upon analysis that the author, for all his superficial roughness, can be very sensitive in the delicacy of his formal progressions. For his tendentious situation, he draws upon our sympathies for a courageous, hard-working, but victimized mother. The "argument" falls into three parts: (1) we see the mother rejecting the thin-lipped charity that would separate her from her children; (2) we get an effectively ironic association when the son, resolving to be a "man," hears the other children playing "hide and seek," and yearns to join them; (3) the mother rigorously at toil. The chapter is rhetorically rounded off with something that might be called a coda. Apparently at a tangent, Conroy falls to telling of an incident unrelated to the matters at hand—and when he has finished, he suddenly reveals its application to his theme. It becomes a bitter device for rejecting "those canned Western Union greetings" for Mother's Day. If the reader is not moved by this turn, at once surprising and prepared, he is blessed with a tougher skin than is your present correspondent. Conroy evidently likes to think of himself as a "diamond in the rough" sort of writer; but the correctness of his form reveals a sense of propriety in the best sense of the word.

Ben Field's "Cow" is interesting as a problem in propaganda because of its vigorous attempt to combat anti-Semitism by destroying the stereotype image of the Jew and assembling a different cluster of traits in its stead. Perhaps he approaches his task a little too head on. Hence, those

who respond strongly to the stereotype will tend to feel his portrait as "false," since his zeal for reconstruction gets him into the "statuesque" rather than the "humane." But its attainments may be felt despite its defects—and one must recognize the justice of its inclusion in a book of this kind, representing the attitudes of a group which, like the many religious bodies of the Hellenistic period, recruits its members by cutting on the bias across traditional distinctions of nationality and race.

Albert Halper's "Scab!" suffers from an O. Henry patness in the "well-made" conversion of the last two lines. But it makes one notable contribution in the search for propaganda situations. Halper adds this particular twist: he establishes his own point of view by showing a man who sins against it in spite of himself. He "weights" his material by giving a sympathetic plea for the strikebreaker while at the same time causing the strikebreaker to revolt against his own rôle. Obviously, such internal conflicts, that match external conflicts, provide a good opportunity for the dramatic—and Halper develops the possibilities with complexity, complexity enough in fact to have spared us the bluntness of the ending.

Albert Maltz's "Man on the Road" is a remarkable mixture of dream-magic and realistic shrewdness. The man with the glazed eyes, standing at the approach to the tunnel, conveys to us the overtones of the "pit," and of "living death." Yet the fact that the author built his ominous dreaming about a worker dying of silicosis (his politics prompting him to see the "news" in the West Virginia disaster without waiting for the story to "break" in our headlines) indicates how deep an author's enlistment in a practical cause may go. We observe how a writer may on occasion tie even his dreams to a party line.

I might close my reference to the story section by a mention of an excerpt, complete in itself, from Edwin Seaver's novel of white-collar workers, "The Company." Seaver has evidently learned much from Sherwood Anderson, whose lyric mode of story-telling he applies to his idylls and laments of metropolitan life. He is particularly good at finding simple themes that suggest complex connotations. In some ways, the tendentious situation embodied in his portrait of Aarons places us strategically at the very "narrows" of the propaganda issue. Aarons works for a public relations counsel—and the public relations counsel is the proletarian propa-

gandist in reverse. He is purely and simply the historic devil. For whereas (the proletarian propagandist would enter the region of overlap between) his group and the people for the purpose of enlisting the people *in behalf of* social change, the public relations counsel would work in this same marginal territory *to obstruct* social change. Hence the subtlety of the situation which Seaver economically depicts for us, as we see Aarons, with a revolutionary interest in this region of overlap, employed by a man whose business it is to manipulate this same region for reactionary purposes. We watch Aarons making himself at home in this schizoid state. We see him undermining the simple loyalty of the others in the office, until their self-cynicism impairs the convincingness of their copy, while Aarons has learned to harness his detestation. From the very violation of his own beliefs, he derives a perverse strength, and is finally commended by his boss in the presence of those whose confidence in themselves he has destroyed. The bowing of the head, the theme on which this brief story ends, is mutely eloquent.

I have considered the stories at some length, since they lend themselves particularly well to an analysis of the tactics underlying propagandist art. Turning to the poetry section, we note that the lyrics necessarily possess, in their *epistolary, polemic* ingredient, a level of relevance beneath which they cannot sink. There are such incidents as May Day, the burning of the books, the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti to be commemorated; there is a definite need of encouragement to equip one for the intricacies of "class struggle"—hence the strongly recitative, oratorical note that pervades this form, a form rapidly becoming almost bereft of gravitational pull. To borrow a word from capitalism, we may note that there is a "market" for occasional verse, devotional verse, and the ritualization of dogma. These poets are at the stage where Commodianus was in the upbuilding of Catholic poetry. One feels behind them the pressure and sincerity of hunger (sometimes hunger literally, more often hunger in its wider, metaphorical aspects). Much of this verse is not written merely for the eye, or even for the ear, but for the mouth. Thus, though most of these atheistic poets would be scandalized at the thought, I should say that their verse is primarily concerned, in secular guise, with the mimetics of prayer. For prayer, we are told by the shrewdest of our naturalistic explainers-away,

derives the force of its appeal from the first experiences of childhood when the child learns "word magic," the influencing of reality by speech (as when it summons its nurse by calling for her). Its obverse is the anathema. So we get here the building of character by the "magical" devices of petition, plaint, and curse.

Let me mention, "among those present," such pieces as: Kenneth Fearing's three declamatory poems, an amalgam of politics and sentiment. Robert Gessner's "Cross of Flame," vigorously realizing for us the incidents before the Reichstag fire. Michael Gold's "A Strange Funeral in Braddock" ("listen to the story of a strange American funeral"); and his "Examples of Worker Correspondence" suggest good possibilities, if the poet can resist the temptation to convert his wise lameness into a mannerism. Horace Gregory's "Dempsey, Dempsey," employing for polemic purposes the psychoanalytic account of the "identification" process. Alfred Hayes' "In a Coffee Pot," interesting for its transformation from the theme of *one man's unemployment* to the theme of *organized group resistance,* an "extension device" also well utilized in Langston Hughes' "Ballad of Lenin." James Neugass' "Thalassa, Thalassa" (a serviceable "idea," as he incongruously draws upon our connotations of ancient Greece when celebrating a strike of Greek freighters at Buenos Aires, though it is far better as an invention than in its working out). Kenneth Patchen's "Joe Hill Listens to the Praying," a work conducted on three levels: the sermon, Joe Hill, the poet's comments. Edwin Rolfe's "Unit Assignment," a homely but accurate account of an incident in the spreading of the doctrine. Muriel Rukeyser's "City of Monuments," the imaginative opposing of tomb and sprout. Isidor Schneider's "Portrait of a False Revolutionist" ("He'll chant red song/like a cricket all day long")—also one should note his use of the Brecht-Eisler "you must be ready to take over" theme in "To the Museums." The middle class writer's concern with scruples, in Genevieve Taggard's "Life of the Mind, 1933" and "Interior." Don West's "Southern Lullaby" (which Mr. Brooks had condemned for its sentimentality, an unfavorable diagnosis one could rephrase favorably, or part-favorably, by saying that the author undertakes the strategic feat of incongruously introducing politics into the least political of themes). And

two anonymous Negro pieces, which well illustrate how the moods of the spiritual can be drawn upon for "modern" purposes.

The "reportage" section is excellent. Perhaps it maintains the highest average of quality in the whole anthology. Nor is this an accident. I sometimes wonder whether, when Communists speak of "reality," they mean purely and simply "news." And there is a notable accuracy here. The early bards were hardly more than news peddlers. Later, when the bourgeois order became established, the resistance to the democratization of news was stubborn and powerful (since private access to news gave one a distinct commercial advantage). And Communists feel, of course, that "the news" is still being tampered with, to an extent that prevents people from seeing, in the proper proportions, the "realities" of the historic process now under way. Each of these eight items has much to recommend it. I should mention in particular the strange circumstantiality of Meridel Le Sueur's "I Was Marching." It has an almost mystical cast, that may result from the hysterical suppression of terror. Nor can one read Agnes Smedley's "The Fall of Shangpo" without being fascinated. She carefully depicts the dreadful upheavals of the human mind as archaic ways of thought are jammed brutally into new situations. John Mullen's "Mushrooms in the Factory" is brief, with a surprising touch of fancy in its ingenious way of revealing the workers' attachment to their place of work despite the many good reasons for alienation. Perhaps John L. Spivak's "A Letter to the President" is the most vulnerable article in this section. Spivak learned his trade doing "sob sister" work for MacFadden. He has brilliance, and the events he is describing make an authentic claim upon our sympathies—but it would take no princess to be disturbed by the pea of his early training beneath the twenty mattresses of his politics.

The inclusion of Clifford Odets' "Waiting for Lefty" among the plays would be enough to make the drama section valuable. I spoke earlier of the tendency to *begin* with propaganda situations and work towards character. This method of construction is more natural to the dramatist—and in "Waiting for Lefty" it flowers. Odets builds characters with strict reference to their functional necessity; his efficiency is sometimes astounding. This functional or formal emphasis prompts him to make unexpected discoveries. When the crooked labor leader says, for instance, that it is "only

an hour's ride on the train" to Philadelphia, a voice pipes up: "Two hours!"—and these simple words carry an enormous load. They are *eloquent* in their place, because they are rich with promise. In their trivial stubbornness, they show you which way the arrows are pointing. You are amused—and there is a strong promise that your attitude of vengefulness towards the crooks will subsequently be permitted fuller expression.

Marxism is above all an inducement to drama. It is a dramatic theory of history, for it clearly and unmistakably names the vessels of good and evil (you can't make good drama without the assistance of a villain in goading forward the plot). It is loquacious, litigious, rhetorical. In our theatres at least, the revolution has already taken place, as the old hack producers of the "give the public what it wants" school had already brought on the fatal crisis in culture, darkening one house after another by their inability to have the least notion as to what the public wants. In addition to full-sized plays, requiring considerable commercial organization, there are many short skits being produced without scenery, in political gatherings of one sort or another. At their poorest, they merely confirm the audience's prejudices, as a war play in war times. But often they "transcend" these simpler requirements, attaining a wider comic or tragic scope—and there is no reason why, as audiences develop, the talent they enlist should not develop also.

As for the specific works in this collection: Odets' "Waiting for Lefty" and Alfred Kreymborg's "America, America!" (somewhat in the manner of a morality play) will probably appeal best when read, though all the pieces can disclose virtues to those who also watch for *theatric* possibilities.

I agree with Newton Arvin that the section on criticism seems least developed. The dramatic invitation to "make a choice" may lead the critic to make his choice too soon. Here enters the problem of "suspended judgment," as against the invitation to the dramatics of invective. In fact, if one reads Michael Gold's "Wilder: Prophet of the Genteel Christ" purely as a fiction, he is likely to enjoy it much better. I could even imagine Wilder enjoying it, if he were able to think of it as a Cicero thundering against a Catiline. And in "Eagle Orator," Malcolm Cowley administers very deft punishment to Paul Engle's earlier work, "American Song." For

criticism of a non-pyrotechnic nature, we should signalize Edwin Berry Burgum's appreciation of Spender, Auden, and Lewis, written from the standpoint of their serviceability in shaping revolutionary attitudes. And the essay by the younger critics, William Phillips and Philip Rahv, bears testimony that they understand the complexity and indirectness involved in the "imaginative assimilation of political content." Indeed, I believe that their reservations would require them, editors of the Communist *Partisan Review,* to be less friendly towards some of the political matter in this anthology than I have been. We should also include here a reference to Joseph Freeman's introduction which, though prolix and unnecessarily defensive, contains many acute formulations.

In conclusion: As one particularly interested in the *processes* of literary appeal, I have generally tended to consider the volume from this standpoint. I have been vague about "absolute" tests of excellence, for I frankly do not know what such tests might be. Particularly in works of a controversial nature, the imponderabilia of emotional bias strongly influence our aesthetic judgments. Hence, in dealing with a book of this sort, I thought it better to place the emphasis upon the matter of functions, which are neutral, available to anyone, like a theory of ballistics. But in the course of discussing processes, I have also found it necessary to touch somewhat upon the "way of life" that gives them meaning.

For the anthology does represent a way of life—and in this congregational feature lies the power and the promise of the "proletarian" movement as a contribution to our culture. In this movement, there is the customary high percentage of unexalted moments, as regards the field of literary representation, and even more so as regards the field of practical relationships. But taking what we have, I think we may see how the "proletarian" sort of emphases and admonitions can provide a lasting and essential stimulus to the formation of the national "consciousness."

THE GREENBERG MANUSCRIPT AND HART CRANE'S POETRY

Philip Horton

THE SPRING of this year marked the passage of the fourth year since the death of Hart Crane. At that time his name stood variously for "the most distinguished poetry of the age," for "the cult of unintelligibility," for the death rattle of romanticism, for the defeat of poetry in the modern world; indeed, for so many things that the name sometimes seemed to be a fetish for critics. When the news of his suicide was published, there was a flood of controversies and editorials about its significance; poems to his memory appeared in many of the literary magazines; in England the names of Keats and Shelley were mentioned. But most of the critics and purveyors of popular poetry comfortably insisted that his name and works would be comparatively unknown in a few years.

It has not been long since that time; not long enough certainly to give the lie to those who prophesied oblivion for his poetry. There have been many signs, however, which constitute a prophecy to the contrary: manifest indications that his poetry is probably the most important contemporary influence on the poetry of the present time. Where the younger poets of the last decade acknowledged Eliot as their master, those of the present novitiate pay homage to Crane. This is especially significant if one recalls that the current of modern poetry since Crane's death has been set in increasing momentum toward the socially conscious and "revolutionary" expressions of the leftist movements with which Crane had no

affiliations or sympathies. It is token of the strength of his influence that it holds sway in spite of, rather than because of, the prevailing poetic temper of the day, which was not the case with Eliot's dominance of the last decade. There is also a sign of the breadth and depth of Crane's power in the fact that both the technique and spirit of his work have been assimilated into the new "revolutionary" poetry. Whether one selects a "proletarian" anthology or one of a more eclectic character, the evidence of Crane's influence is equally remarkable. Similarly in the current reviews, articles, and books concerning poetry there has been an increasing recognition of the importance of Crane's work as the critics have come to realize that the bulk of his verse stands firmly and healthily rooted in the best tradition of English poetry. A prominent English critic and anthologist has written that there are passages of natural description in "The Dance" from *The Bridge* which equal the best poetry of the Romantic period. And many of our own critics have noted the magnificent Elizabethanisms of epithet and metaphor which stud many of his best lines. But for all that, Crane is preëminently a poet of the contemporary world and an indigenous product of Middle-Western America. He undertook not only the eternal obligation of the poet to express the relationship between the individual and the world, but also the possibly more difficult task of the poetic synthesis and articulation of a national consciousness. In his character as a national poet there is a further explanation of his influence in modern poetry and also of his importance in the minds of the increasing number of students up and down the country who are writing their theses on his poetry. There is no doubt in those minds at least that the post-War period of expatriation for the artist ended with the 'twenties. Indeed, for their generation it has ended so completely that the literature which it produced is relatively impertinent to their own problems. To them Eliot, who was the foremost poet of the period, is comparable to the "Lost Leader" of the Romantic Movement. But those years of exile were to quite an extent a pursuit of perspective and a preparation for the renascence of a larger and more sympathetic understanding of the mother country, so that at the end of the 'twenties there was already entrenched in America a violently active movement of national consciousness. Hart Crane and *The*

Bridge, straddling the watershed of these two periods, dominate the poetry of the present and future in an important and permanent way.

It is because of the significance of this position in American poetry and the increasingly widespread recognition of it that any discovery which illuminates his work or life becomes important. Such a discovery has recently been made in a sheaf of poems which, because of their startling influence on Crane's work and the mystery of their authorship, constitute a curious literary puzzle. The manuscript in question was sent me by the elderly caretaker of the Hart family's plantation on the Isle of Pines off Cuba—Mrs. T. W. Simpson, the "Aunt Sally" of the "River" section of *The Bridge.* It was found among belongings Crane had left there in 1926, when he was working on *The Bridge,* and was sent to me as some of his own poetry. The manuscript comprises nineteen sheets of cheap yellow foolscap covered with typewritten poems and held together by clips between two cover sheets of pale blue paper. On the front sheet is printed in ink "Greenberg Mss." This name, coupled with the initials "S. B. G.," with which several of the poems are signed, leads to the conclusion that the author's name was S. B. Greenberg. (For the author is most certainly not Hart Crane.) In several instances these typed initials are followed by the date of composition. The period of composition seems to have extended from 1913 to 1915. It should be recalled here that during that time Crane was between his fourteenth and sixteenth years. From evidence that will appear later it would seem that Crane must have been in possession of these poems from 1920 on; yet there is no mention in any of his letters of a Greenberg or of any such manuscript; nor do any of his friends, thus far consulted, recall having heard him speak of such a person.

The poems themselves are very curious. Even the titles, which are usually some single abstract noun, such as *Life, Man, Lust, Perusal, Immortality,* etc., strike one as peculiar, contrasted as they are with the esoteric and eccentric body of the poetry. Most of the poems are written in approximate sonnet length without the sonnet division or rhyme. Indeed, there are only a few which show a consistent use of rhyme throughout. For the most part that device, with many another, is used haphazardly, if at all. The meter, too, is casual at best, varying between a loose tetra-

meter and pentameter, and often involving extremely awkward rhythms. Were it not for the obviously poetic diction and intention, the poems could best be described as elliptical and chaotic prose, withal exalted.

The poetic diction, however, is unmistakable, marked out as it is, by the frequent use of such archaic contractions as *pon, e'en, e'er, o'er, 'round, etc.* The author seems so peculiarly addicted to this practice as to extend the principle to almost any word, even without reason, thus achieving remarkably ludicrous effects. "Melancholy 'frain" and "Horizon's paradise 'scape" are examples. Add to this a very deficient sense of spelling, or perhaps simply gross carelessness in typing, a bewildering syntax, or lack of it, and an extraordinary use of words, both known and unknown, and one has an idea of the impression of insanity received upon a first reading of the poems. There are such words as "irragulate," "coval," "rhines," "stally," and "agown," many of which may be possible misspellings, some of which are discovered to be archaic, and others of which baffle every attempt of the understanding. One has the successive impressions that the author was mad, illiterate, esoteric, or simply drunk. And yet there flash out from this linguistic chaos lines of pure poetry, powerful, illuminating, and original, lines unlike any others in English literature, except Blake's perhaps. There are the lines: "through dense lofty heavens borne In pure unceasing crisp of light My Holy Ghost"; and "within its bright pealing shine Thy lovely stem"; and "through the deep valleys of glorifying mirth my soul ray hence"; and finally, "the tallest of us needs inner greet, to rise and feel the grail." Reading them, one takes thought again, feeling the genuine exaltation, and wonders. A visionary, then. A *Gottbetrunkener Mensch.* But who was he, or is he? Did Hart Crane, who had his poems, know?

Although such questions must go begging for the time being, it can be definitely stated that Crane was influenced by these poems. To those familiar with Crane's poetry it must already be clear that he would have felt a rather strong affinity with the temperament of this poet. There is, for instance, the same disregard for ordinary syntax in Crane's lines:

> All fragrance irrefragibly, and claim
> Madly meeting logically in this hour . . .

as one finds in these lines from the Greenberg MS:

> The perfect gauze can irragulate prophecy
> Pon serious tempo, blame serene ratio
> As string adhered charm does to love!

Both poets seem to leap over the devious channels of syntax to arrive at a more immediate expression of their feeling or thought, as though too much of intensity would otherwise drain away from their inspiration. The usual formal niceties of the language appear to them as so many holes through which the bright and fluid quality of their meanings seeps away. There is consequently in the poetry of both a surprising density of language and a corresponding concentration of thought. But it is in the use of words and phrases that one recognizes the greatest similarities. Crane must indeed have admired the man who in 1913 (evidently) could so free himself from the prevailing poetic language as to write of "smooth, tangible, accessible skin," or of meadows as a "vat of fragrance"; of poets "drilling their brains in beaten headaches"; of memory as "gluttinous helium of thought's endowment." Crane himself threw overboard the available poetic vocabulary of his time, and was constantly concerned with renewing and reviving the language of poetry. He speaks of this subject in his letters where he says that unless a poet can express the old eternal truths in a new way, there is no use in writing at all. He confesses also a love for the "musty and brooding and the esoteric"; for just such poetry as much of the Greenberg MS represents.

But more significant than the similarity of a powerful and original use of words is the affinity of temperament, one might even say of vision, which is evidenced in the recurrence of particular metaphors and symbols, common to the poetry of both. Throughout the Greenberg MS there is a continual imagery involving rainbows, waves, shadows, and blossoms, with very much the same "meaning" as the the same symbols carry in Crane's work. These symbols have as their major referents love and lust, spirit and flesh; and the dynamics of the poetry as a whole originates in the basic conflict implicit between these two forces. To anyone intimate with Crane's work it will be unnecessary to state that the same conflict is one of the primary and profound problems of his life and poetry, and that

his vision is largely concerned with a solution of it. Nor is it more needful, I imagine, to remind the reader of the imagery Crane uses to express this vision, especially in the "Voyages" and the "Atlantis" section of *The Bridge*. One recalls vividly the "rainbows twining continual hair," "the secret oar and petals of all love," and the many various metaphors drawn from sea and flower which make such incredible delight of certain passages. With this in mind, the following lines from the Greenberg MS should illustrate sufficiently the affinity of which I have been speaking. The poem is entitled "Lust."

> . . . . . for lustre hath surmised
> Inpouring rainbows of satieties silhouette,
> Cosmies lotus shadowings and
> Lewd Satyr's passion sought
> Refuge, before their uprisen
> Luminous waves, all felt to
> The sensual net of lecherous
> Wounds, abiding from spiritual thought.

I have been at such pains to establish this affinity of spirit between the two poets the better to account for, and interpret, the strong influence the Greenberg MS had on Crane's poetry. To just what extent the similarities may be due on the one hand to Crane's reading of the poems, or on the other hand to a native and genuine likeness of temperament, is largely speculation. Ultimately and in general it is, of course, a question of both. But in several instances where Crane borrowed forthright and deliberately from the Greenberg MS it must be said to be the former. The evidence of this direct borrowing is to be found in "Voyages II" and in "Emblems of Conduct." There are other passages which I feel derive from the Greenberg poems; but they are so fragmentary, unimportant, and ambiguous as to be negligible.

In the case of "Voyages II" the borrowings are not evident in the final and published version, but are found in the MS copies in my possession. Strangely enough, this manuscript is almost identical in its make-up with the Greenberg MS. That is, it is typed, and written in longhand, on similar yellow foolscap, and is covered with the same pale blue paper.

This might indicate that Crane had copied the Greenberg poems from an original manuscript. However that may be, I discovered in these early versions of "Voyages II" that Crane had used phrases from four different poems of the Greenberg MS. That he borrowed them deliberately is clear, I think, from the fact that they recur persistently and with variations at least eight or ten times in each case before finally disappearing or being assimilated into the final version. There is not space here to consider these borrowings in detail, but I should like to illustrate how one phrase from the Greenberg poem, "Shadowings," was transmuted into Crane's own poetry. The line in question is: "Silhouette set the scepters roving." This first appears in "Voyages II" as:

> Take this sea then; enlisted by what sceptres
> roving wide from isle to isle have churned . . .

It then appears in the following successive variations: "Silhouettes of sceptres roving," "set with sceptres roving," "circled by their sceptres roving," "shadowed sceptres roving." A new phrase is then introduced into the poem, one of Crane's own making: "in terror of her sessions." And thus in the next version we find the Greenberg line completely assimilated into Crane's own poetry as:

> The sceptred terror of whose sessions rends
> All else than Deity's green crested Herb.

The second line is also taken exactly from one of the Greenberg poems, but shortly gives place to Crane's own line: "All but the pieties of lovers' hands," which gives us the two lines as they stand in the published version.

This is a fair example, I think, of the relation of the Greenberg MS to the "Voyages." Nor can Crane's work in this instance be said to show any more substantial indebtedness than this illustration witnesses. Indeed, the final version of "Voyages II" can hardly be said to be indebted, in the usual sense, to these strange poems. But that they did stimulate Crane's imagination is equally certain.

The only instance where Crane's poetry in its published form is heavily and obviously indebted to the Greenberg MS is in "Emblems

of Conduct," which appeared in *White Buildings*. If I am not mistaken, this poem was first mentioned by Crane in a letter to Mr. Gorham Munson in May, 1920, which would indicate that he already had the Greenberg MS in his possession, or had at least read it carefully. In any case the poems were in his hands at the time he was writing "Voyages II"; and on one of the manuscripts of that poem I find the date "9/27/24." But to return to "Emblems of Conduct." It is certainly one of Crane's more difficult poems. Mr. Allen Tate mentions it in the Foreword to *White Buildings* as one in which the meaning is implicit and can not be derived or paraphrased. In any case it is a very beautiful poem of an almost architectural structure and progression. Its meaning, I feel, is clear enough in the last line of each of the three stanzas which state variations of the principal theme. In view of this dense and careful structure it is amazing to find that of the seventeen lines of the poem only two or three are wholly original with Crane; the remainder are lifted literally from four different poems of the Greenberg MS.

The nucleus of "Emblems of Conduct" is found in a poem called "Conduct," which I quote in full:

> By a peninsula, the painter sat and
> sketched the uneven valley graves
> The apostle gave alms to the
> Meek, the volcano burst
> In fusive sulphur and hurled
> Rocks and ore into the air,
> Heaven's sudden change at
> The drawing tempestuous
> Darkening shade of dense clouded hues
> The wanderer soon chose
> This spot of rest, they bore the
> Chosen hero upon their shoulders
> Whom they strangely admired—as
> The Beach tide summer of people desired.

If we compare with this the first stanza of Crane's poem, it will be seen that the first four lines are almost identical:

By a peninsula the wanderer sat and sketched
The uneven valley graves. While the apostle gave
Alms to the meek the volcano burst
With sulphur and aureate rocks . . .
For joy rides in stupendous coverings
Luring the living into spiritual gates.

The magnificent line next to the last, which we read in association with the volcano, is taken from the last line of another Greenberg poem, "Forest," and there reads: "For joy hides its stupendous coverings." One is amazed that the slight changes made effected such a complete transformation of meaning and feeling. The last line of the stanza quoted above is taken from the poem in the Greenberg MS which follows directly below the poem "Conduct," and opens with: "But only to be memories of spiritual gates." It is this line in variations which closes each stanza of Crane's poem and which I feel contains the essential "meaning" of it. The title of this new Greenberg poem is "Immortality," and in addition to the "theme line" of Crane's poem it contributes another line to the second stanza of "Emblems of Conduct." I quote a passage which includes both:

The museums of the ancient, fine stones
For bowls and cups, found historians
Sacred adorations, the numismatist hath shown
But only to be memories of spiritual gates
Letting us feel the difference from the real . . .

In order to follow the development of this curious work in mosaic, I quote the second stanza of "Emblems of Conduct":

Orators follow the universe
And radio the complete laws to the people
The apostle conveys thought through discipline.
Bowls and cups fill historians with adorations,—
Dull lips commemorating spiritual gates.

We have already seen that the last two lines of this stanza were taken from the poem "Immortality." The first three lines are borrowed almost literally from still another poem, "Perusal," in which one reads:

. . . . . The apostle
Reigns over the community in conveying
His thoughtful discipline through
Speech. The orator follows the universe
And refrains the laws of the people . . .

So we see that there is not a single line in the second stanza of Crane's own making; nor, for that matter, in the first stanza. Crane's only original contribution to his poem, as far as actual phrases are concerned, comes in the last two lines but one of the last stanza, which I quote entire:

The wanderer later chose this spot of rest
Where marble clouds support the sea
And where was finally borne a chosen hero.
By that time summer and smoke were past.
Dolphins still played, arching the horizons,
But only to build memories of spiritual gates.

The second line, too, may as well be attributed to Crane, although there is the germ of it in a line from another Greenberg poem: "The floating marble like clouds." The remainder of this stanza, with the exception of the two lines already mentioned as original, is drawn again from the poem "Conduct," which is quoted above. And the last line, the "theme line," is found this time to be identical with the original Greenberg version excepting the change from "be" to "build." Such, then, was the making of "Emblems of Conduct."

In an attempt to explain this curious relationship there have been many guesses made. Some of Crane's friends who have seen the Greenberg MS have thought that possibly Crane himself was after all the author of those strange poems. It has been ventured, for instance, that they are some early verses which he later revised. But no boy of fourteen or sixteen could command the esoteric and highly sophisticated vocabulary of the Greenberg MS; nor would he be obsessed by the ethical considerations which are implicit in most of the poems. It has further been guessed that Crane wrote them when he was drunk, or as a joke, and so forth. I hardly think it necessary to point out the absurdity of such suppositions. In the little that has been quoted here of the Greenberg poems I think it must

be clear that the author of them, although having a certain affinity with Crane, was a person of entirely different calibre. Furthermore, it is not more likely that some of the poems are by Crane, and some by the unknown author. There is a distinct and consistent personality continuous throughout, manifest in the highly characteristic eccentricities of thought and speech. In short, it is evident that Crane did not write these poems. For the rest, we have seen that he did borrow from them, probably both consciously and unconsciously, sometimes assimilating them completely into his own idiom and at other times simply rewriting them with variations as he found them. What is important, however, is that such poems as "Emblems of Conduct" and "Voyages II," however much, or little, they may be indebted to the Greenberg MS, are indubitably Crane's own poetry. The slightest alterations in a line (cf. "For joy rides in stupendous coverings") are sufficient, strangely enough, to revivify it with his own personality and inform it with his own meanings. The Greenberg MS is on the whole, and in spite of rifts of pure illumination, very bad poetry, impossible and tortuous jungles of language where little or no meaning shines. That Crane could produce a beautiful and clear (in a formal sense, at least) creation from the fragments of four obscure poems is a concrete illustration of the synthetic power of his imagination and insight. I say *insight* advisedly, for I believe that in "Emblems of Conduct" he actually expressed and realized a large part of the intention of the Greenberg poems which inspired it. The poem is not simply a *tour de force*, a brilliant mosaic of phrase and metaphor (although the method of composition might suggest it). There is, rather, a genuine and powerful emotion behind it, the emotion which Crane must have felt in the original Greenberg line, "But only to be memories of spiritual gates." And the essential meaning of this line, which might be stated as the frustration of spiritual life by our daily mores—a thing which Crane felt very deeply—is developed by him through variation and counterpoint to attain the full diapason of eloquent expression in "Emblems of Conduct."

It may well be that future discoveries will disprove some of the opinions stated here. Indeed, where there is such a paucity of available data almost any ultimate solution is conceivable. It is quite possible, for instance, that there is not, and never has been, such a person as "S. B.

Greenberg." But if there is, and his identity is finally revealed, if it is ascertained whether or not Crane knew him personally, or only through his poetry, then there may be much more to say concerning the relationship of their work; and perhaps much that has already been said will have to be withdrawn. I have so far uncovered only one clue which offers any indication of what Crane's personal relations with him might have been. Written below a poem in the Greenberg MS called "The 'East River's' Charm," in a hand which is unmistakably Crane's, there are two lines, scrawled as though in reply to the verses above them, like the abrupt and beginning lines of a poem:

> And will I know if you are dead?
> The river leads on and on instead
> Of certainty . . . .

And so, perhaps, even Crane did not know . . . .

POETS OF FIVE DECADES

Morton Dauwen Zabel

THE UNITY for which one gropes in combining seventeen new books of verse comes, unexpectedly, less from what they show of the habits of poets during the past five months than from the changes they reveal in fifty years of modern poetic history. These fifty years begin with Æ's early lyrics, written in the 'eighties. They continue through the quarter-century covered by Eliot's newly collected works and the receding generation of Robert Frost and Marianne Moore. They take in Archibald MacLeish's attempt to straddle two post-War decades, and come down to the newest exhibits of the rising vanguard of proletarian youth. The aesthetic revolt and Celtic dawn of the 'nineties link up with the pre-War hour of disputes and hesitations. Post-War distraction advances toward post-Depression revivalism, and this finally forecasts the social and cultural reconstruction now announced under the banner of the Marxist revolutionaries. All this

Selected Poems, by Æ (George W. Russell). New York: The Macmillan Co. $2.00. *Collected Poems, 1909-1935,* by T. S. Eliot. New York: Harcourt, Brace. $2.50. *A Further Range,* by Robert Frost. New York: Henry Holt. $2.00. *The Pangolin and Other Verse,* by Marianne Moore. London: The Brendin Publishing Co. (Limited edition). Two guineas. *Stranger's Garment,* by Gilbert Maxwell. New York: Dodd, Mead. $2.00. *Poems, 1935,* by F. L. Lucas. New York: The Macmillan Co. $1.75. *Fear Is the Thorn,* by Rachel Field. New York: The Macmillan Co. $1.35. *Seven Song,* by Patrick Dacus Moreland. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran. $1.50. *Public Speech,* by Archibald MacLeish. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $1.00. *The Natural Need,* by

sketches one of the most complex chapters in modern literature, and encourages a good deal of reminiscence. The leap from the aesthetic decadence to our present "hopes for poetry" was as perilous as any on record. It was complicated by spiritual and technical handicaps more formidable than are commonly encountered in the strides and acrobatics of the poetic imagination. Its arc of alternating protest and reaction, experiment and conformity, of liberalism at odds with orthodoxy, and thus through the progressive emancipation, confusion, and decline of the individual in an age of rising social claims, now covers a familiar part of history. But this familiarity does not presuppose much uniformity of interpretation among critics, nor, of course, of purpose and method among the poets now before us.

To pass, however, from Æ's *fin-de-siècle* lyricism, with its muted music and tones of mystical elevation, to the latest blatancy of Paul Engle or the firmer valedictions of Day Lewis and Edwin Rolfe, is to realize that whatever contradictions are permitted the modern spirit, a line of purpose has been defined, and along it the serious motives of contemporary poetry must be traced and determined. The line describes great difficulties as it passes through these volumes, but in the end it comes to a fairly pointed indication of what the issues of the moment are, and what those of the coming decade will be.

When this cycle of half a century began, poets were still writing *Man* with the monumental initial of moral supremacy. The word soon dwindled to the water-written characters of spiritual illusion; it diminished to the pale letters of self-excoriation and humility; it shrank into the shadow

James Reeves. Deya, Majorca; Seizin Press; London: Constable & Company. Five shillings. *Phases of the Moon,* by Charlotte Wilder. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc. $2.00. *Break the Heart's Anger,* by Paul Engle. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran. $2.00. *Before the Brave,* by Kenneth Patchen. New York: Random House. $2.00. *The Iron Land, A Narrative,* by Stanley Burnshaw. Philadelphia: Centaur Press. $2.00. *Thanksgiving Before November,* by Norman Macleod. New York: The Parnassus Press. $2.00. *A Time to Dance, Noah and the Waters, and Other Poems, with an Essay on Revolution in Writing,* by C. Day Lewis. New York: Random House. $1.75. *To My Contemporaries,* by Edwin Rolfe. New York: Dynamo Press. $1.00.

of moral evasions and doubts. Now it flares out once more in the fiery capitals of a humanitarian rebirth. The processes of poetic experience have shifted from courage to fear, from ecstasy to skepticism, and animal unfaith, from the contempt of society to its triumph, and now from abject demoralization to the splendor of a "new-world objective." Following an interim of misgiving and enfeebled confidences among poets, we confront a new age of defiance and manifestos. Out of four literary generations thus covered a sizable discussion of poetic causes and crises might be written, but that labor—perhaps a gratuitous one—must be deferred to a more spacious occasion. Meanwhile a number of things that have happened recently to the style and motivation of verse are exhibited to advantage, and several conclusions about its immediate condition may be hazarded.

The simplest of these concerns the mere matter of bulk in a poet's achievement. Before Æ died last summer he prepared for publication the poems by which he wished to "be remembered," and found that he had assembled less than two hundred pages from the labor of fifty years. Eliot, gathering his complete verse of twenty-six years, makes a book even smaller. Robert Frost and Marianne Moore offer, after long intervals, new collections of slight and austere appearance. Even Archibald MacLeish produces the lightest weight among the eleven volumes of his career. But when one takes up the books of the young proletarian writers one discovers that these cautions of selection and understatement are abruptly discarded. Here are poets, born in years like 1909 and 1914, who have already filled scores of pages with counsel and enthusiasm. Engle, well under thirty, turns out his third volume with no indication whatever that he has spent his wind at the end of 195 pages of uninterrupted eloquence. Norman Macleod prints another installment of an immense output, serially published in the magazines of both hemispheres and a dozen nations. Kenneth Patchen, born in 1911 and "writing since his twelfth year," passes from poem to poem with unchecked impetuosity. C. Day Lewis, at slightly more than thirty, arrives at his eighth volume. And beyond these may be glimpsed the incredible precosity of even younger writers. Either a new age of romantic *Wunderkinder* has arrived, or the poet's idea of his importance and uses has undergone radical change: probably both, but the latter possibility lends itself to safer speculation. This much is certain:

that the tact and precaution rising from self-scrutiny or severe scruples of conscience in a poet have yielded to a sense of his necessity to public causes. With this changing idealism there appears within poetry itself a corresponding change in the shape and appearance of a book of verse, the structure of its pages, and the forms that fill them out.

The change is immediately apparent if one compares the work of Æ (who was also in his day a humanitarian) with that of Patchen and Macleod, or the craft of Eliot's beginnings with that of Rolfe's initial venture in print. These contrasts reveal more than a change from a poetry of specific personal agonies to one of human issues. They show a discarding of the concentrated terms of lyric composition for the spacious dimensions of rhetoric and the assurance of a sweeping public appeal. A book is no longer a collection of items; it forms a continuity of declamations. It is no longer a discipline in concentrated forms, but an exercise in breadth, amplitude, an all-embracing vision and enthusiasm. With the model of Hugo and Whitman revived, "emotion recollected in tranquillity" entails the loss of valuable time and urgent opportunity. Valéry's principle of "infinite revision" appears as the waste of vital energy and passion on the luxury of private aesthetic satisfactions.

Accordingly the moment of specific or rigorous form in poetry appears to be passing for an increasingly large number of apprentices. The disintegration of classic line and stanza, of restraint and discipline, has accompanied the discrediting of the private conflicts or ordeals of which such forms were once the embodiment. We find ourselves once more arrested by books of massed forces and effects, and possibly by a new age of the long poem. We have heard that "the books of a poet are finally one book," but that ideal has usually implied a unity far different from that which now sustains Engle or Macleod through their volumes without the let of revision or the hindrance of selective taste. Eliot's collection is at hand to remind us that in the work of any serious poet there is an inevitable continuity, but with him that continuity was arrived at slowly, by all the pains of extreme concentration and tested proof, and it shows little of the consistency of monotony now often accepted as a sign of high seriousness.

There is, of course, no single prescription for arriving at a genuine unity in poetic achievement. It may come by a lifetime of pragmatic test

and use among a wide range of aesthetic models, as in Yeats; or by the gradual extension of a personal technique, as in Hopkins and Pound; or by undeviating persistence in an inherited style, as in Bridges; or by a single-minded patience of viewpoint, as in Robinson. Such methods may result in as many versions of unity as there are poets to practice them, each may carry its own authority, and it is the privilege of a new literary generation to find a method of its own. But there is at least one prescription for avoiding false unity. It lies in distinguishing at the outset between a coherence which derives from a persistent motive or enlarging realization in a poet, and one which is imposed (usually through assumed dogmas or simplifications) on a young poet's work with no real critical resistance on his part, or one which is called in to reinforce the tentativeness of immature poetic fragments. These suspect kinds of unity—dogmatic or vicarious, arbitrary or wishful as the case may be—are the kinds now in easy evidence among writers. Accordingly the character of first books of verse has changed. The tact of patient beginnings, of personal discovery and certitude, gives way to full-blown self-assurance. The poem springs full-grown—and recklessly defective—from the adolescent brain. We are aware of the virtues of what Pound calls in moments of guarded condescension toward green talent "a general drive"; it may at times be more invigorating than the momentum of exact achievement. But when it becomes increasingly difficult to lay a finger on a sensitive line or phrase, one begins to fear for the longer life of most of the energetic young poets. It goes without saying that their work is preferable to the feeble lyric fragments of the average versifier, or of those glib specialists in the feminine transport who flourish among both sexes in the more refined circles of public approval. But it is less reassuring than were those firm and definitive characterizations of the modern struggle that marked the maturing of Eliot's powers, and still give his early poems their unforgettable attraction to the modern reader. The age demands not merely, as it did of Mauberley, "a mould in plaster, made with no loss of time." It requires an opportunism more vocal and incendiary—an oration, a manifesto, and a prospectus. In one's excitement at receiving these heady rousings and challenges one cannot lose sight of what is still required in genuine poetic experience, and of what the new declamatory poets are sacrificing by their

precocious eloquence, their rapid abundance, and their revived faith in the existence of a vast audience that will not only stay to hear but, hearing, be moved to those actions and violences now exalted above the private ordeal, the discontent, and the spiritual services of art.

Æ and his early contemporaries had great faith in those services, but they too were not unduly reverent in making use of them. Whatever protest the aesthetic generation voiced against Victorian conventions, they accepted poetry with a customary romantic faith in its power to cure and console the distractions of modern life. To them the lyric represented an opportunity neither for penitential grief nor for mental illumination; it offered the charms of spiritual illusion and enchantment. Yeats, in the course of years, came to see the fallacy of this attitude, but in Æ's book we find from beginning to end the tone and music of a convention which begins to disappear from Yeats' work after the revulsions of middle life. More completely even than Arthur Symons, Æ brought the qualities of the English aesthetic movement into the twentieth century, and he had over Symons the advantage of representing them with a more candid and unsophisticated sincerity. He was able to combine in his career more comfortably than Yeats the twin talents of poetic skill and public leadership, for he never faced the necessity of reconciling them as art. For him the duty of arousing a national consciousness, of founding agricultural societies and coöperative industries, editing political journals and inciting a revolution, never appeared to imply the cognate duty of bringing his lyric art to terms with such tests of moral hardihood. His practical life remained closely in touch with the changing spirit of four decades. He was companioned in youth by Young Ireland revolutionaries, treated with respect in middle age in the pages of *Ulysses,* venerated in old age by devotees of all ranks, and honored at his death by the Senate and Academy of the nation he helped to form. Yet his verse adheres throughout to the plaintive and illusory symbolism that was enshrined in a secret and untroubled compartment of his nature—that inner chamber of credulity where the detachment of oriental mysticism found its home. It is impossible to define just how far Æ's excursions into the labors of the Dublin Hermetic group or the Theosophical Society formed a mode of logical reasoning in his

mind, but his poems testify that they provided some kind of concrete utility for his private experiences. He speaks too consistently of "the Dream," "the Ancient Darkness," "the Ancient Beauty," "the Cleansing," and "the Purer Life," as well as of "the Heavenly Brooding [that] is intent to that last instant on Its child," to leave any doubt about the benefits he derived from these odd compoundings of Irish myth with the Vedas and Vaishnava scriptures of Indian literature. Perhaps they helped him maintain his equanimity in an age of war-makers, lunatics, and tormented mystics. He did not attempt to explore their realms of meaning through such ambiguous methods of experimentation as Yeats employed. Apparently he was the securest among those men who converted the nineteenth century's emancipation from religious dogmatism into a symbolism privately derived and arranged to suit themselves. Such symbolism, in any case, conferred on his verse the qualities it conferred on his life—the calm, compassion, and docility of a lasting belief in the ultimate triumph of harmony, beauty, and love—and it is clear which of those two beneficiaries found these virtues inadequate.

What he did not find was the sense of fact, the idiom, the realism in experience and language that might have impressed his faith on his contemporaries. I suppose that no single poem or line of Æ's work is clearly fixed in the general memory of modern readers. He never found among all his beautiful words that final and triumphant Word without which, as his friend Moore remarked, a lifetime of writing is a failure. He contributed no symbol, image, character, or cadence to modern poetry. He shared, in fact, Moore's similar defect in prose, and lived to see Synge, Yeats, and Joyce carry off their victories. As one reads his final book one finds it hard to reconcile its content with all that has been said in praise of the man—not because the poems remain unsuffused by the sweetness of a noble nature, but because they never permit that nobility to harden into the convictions that enforce recognition. Here the faith that man is expected to wrench out of fire and violence is gently assumed from the outset. Where we look for the terror and splendor of conflict we get "light lost in an unimaginable Light," a final strengthless clinging to "the unconsumable, unsubduable, winged, airy beauty of the Psyche born from this thick husk."

Æ was born at a moment when, in the psychology of European men, the notion of a Via Media appeared the one salvation among the contradictions baffling the intellect. He traveled between the skeptical realism of science and the subjective intuitions which he had neither the passion nor the curiosity to analyze clearly for himself. His poetry also hovers between the two. Its indeterminate evasions on matters of life and death infect those realities with its own vagueness. This is not to say that he never wrote moving work. Poems like "On a Hill-Top," "The Things Seen," "Endurance," and "Retribution" arrive at a majesty of phrasing that fully certifies the human honor that inspired them. But no more than ten random pages of this book are needed to show what enfeebles the literary expression of that virtue—the laxity of cadence, wearisome repetition of words *(beauty, dream, dim, vast, deep, high heaven, consuming fire:* all of them the stock objects of modern contempt), and clichés both of feeling and expression that dissipate on the page all that was true and generous in the character.

Æ, at his opposite pole from oncoming talents of the Engle and Patchen type, fell victim to that fault of presumption against which the irony and self-contempt of his followers were applied as a corrective. To him the consolations of poetry came too easily. Between his private intuitions and the enveloping mysteries of Vedic symbolism he discovered a "correspondence" that entailed none of the vital penetration which the greatest Symbolists achieved in their investigations of physical and natural reality. In fact, he avoided throughout his poetry the collisions of creative skepticism, holding instead to the simple nirvanic idealism. His words thus become staples and counters; his language is without personal idiom; his statements melt into the evanescent pietism of his resignation.

> Adieu, sweet-memoried dust, I go
> After the Master for the dream.

These closing lines of "Vale" suggest his typical accent and attitude. The more robust quality of "On a Hill-Top" proves to be exceptional among his haunting visions and palaces of dream.

> Bearded with dewy grass the mountains thrust
> Their blackness high into the still grey light,

Deepening to blue: far up the glimmering height
In silver transience shines the starry dust.
Silent the sheep about me; fleece by fleece

They sleep and stir not: I with awe around
Wander uncertain o'er the giant mound,
A fire that moves between their peace and peace.

These stanzas are firm in structure and movement, and promise a finer resolution than comes about, typically, eight lines later in the final quatrain:

Only from dream to dream our spirits pass;
Well, let us rise and fly from sphere to sphere;
Some one of all unto the light more near
Mirrors the Dreamer in its glowing glass.

When Eliot began to write, the moment for this kind of spiritual illusion had passed from the serious poets of the English scene. He subtitles his *Collected Poems* with the dates *1909-1935*, and by 1909 whatever heroic assumptions remained among the older poets (Swinburne, Meredith, or Moody) passed with the deaths of those men. It had in any case been long reproved by the tragic sarcasm of Hardy, Housman, and Robinson, or—for Eliot more forcibly—by the withering irony of the later Symbolists. There was no further opportunity to lean toward dreams and visions, or upon the ennobling humility of public confession and absolution. If the heroic emerged from the past it did not console the poet either when he borrowed its language or adapted its legends. It diminished to further frailty his dispossession and mediocrity. But curiously, where the promise of oblivion and oneness in "the Dream" deceived Æ into making ineffectual splendor of his own destiny, the extreme contempt of human meanness in a poet like Eliot led to a tangible grasp of what there was in him to be exalted. This produced in the end an illumination of selfhood which achieved the hard and concrete permanence of a legend. It is to legend that Prufrock and Sweeney belong. They cleanse the conscience of modern man by a species of critical purgation. Long as we have read and pondered them, they still give the pleasure of severe epitomes of the meaning of experience.

But as everyone knows, Eliot has moved far from the style and spirit of those poems. "The Waste Land" showed his transition toward a less personal idiom, and a less sympathetic participation in the modern problem. "The Hollow Men" marked a release from, and a disintegration of, the critical intelligence of the earlier verse, showing this not only by its greater flexibility of structure and cadence, but by the words employed. These words begin to modify the sharp epithet and accent of the satires, and to weave around the sensibility within the poems of a subtle web of logical complexity and the casuistries of dialectic argument. It is not too much to claim that this development in Eliot's style reveals the exchange of his powers of introspection for something superior to and beyond personality. His themes change from the dramatic situation of "The Love Song," and "Portrait of a Lady," where self-scrutiny is remorseless and laconic, to the delirium of "The Hollow Men," the self-effacing abnegation of "Ash Wednesday," and finally to the abstract considerations on the nature and meaning of Time in his latest long poem, "Burnt Norton." Here also is a growth away from the meagerness of personal agony toward the freedom of impersonal speculation. But the best quality of "Burnt Norton" resides in its reminders of how severe, strenuous, and practical was the poet's approach toward the present enlargement of his philosophic vision.

Eliot's poems show remarkable changes in these two hundred pages. While they have become more abstract and intricate in their ideas, they have grown simpler and more expository in method. They have exchanged the pithy terseness of the early allegories for the sinuous devices of metaphysical search. Their language has almost entirely lost the colloquial formality of the "Prufrock" volume. Where this persists, and where he still employs the contrasts of cheap modernity with past greatness (as in the two "fragments of an Aristophanic melodrama" or the two poems—"Triumphal March" and "Difficulties of a Statesman"—now grouped as parts of an unfinished work called "Coriolan"), the yoking seems to have the obvious violence of a patented device. By contrast this gives a superior effect to later poems that avoid such conjunction, "Ash Wednesday" and "Marina." Oblique humor has also disappeared from the later work (though not entirely from the volume, for Eliot here prints a number of

nonsense pieces, "Five-finger Exercises," which hardly impress as important.) He has become on the whole a more patient and explicit—that is, a more popular—poet. No doubt there are derivations concealed in his later work which will enlist the services of future Williamsons and Matthiessens. I have not traced them far; "Burnt Norton" seems to derive its Time-theme as much from speculators like Whitehead and Dunne as from the lines of Heraclitus printed below the title. But these poems, like the choruses from *The Rock* and *Murder in the Cathedral,* impose no such task of identification on the studious reader as was demanded by every line and page of "The Waste Land." Their subtleties are organic to themselves; the poem's whole problem is contained within the poem and does not fly off at the tangent of each literary echo or historical reference. And at times, as in "Animula" and "Marina," the feeling and utterance of the poet concentrate into passages of superb lyric vision.

When Eliot stood isolated and dispossessed among the ruins of a familiar universe, every nerve and sensation quivered with its own life. The antennae of his intelligence were alive with nervous vitality. This resulted in images and allegories of great focal sharpness. In more recent years, approaching stranger territory, this grip on identity is no longer held, and with its relaxation the nervous sensibility of his diction and cadence has lessened. He writes either a more relaxed and speculative verse, or a sort of argument which attempts to extend his intellectual problems beyond their own limits. He has become a poet of more public qualities, of religious responsibilities, and even (in *The Rock*) of social concerns. These have entailed a change from a style of cryptic historical reference and erudition to one of dialectic lucidity, or even of popular simplification. He also has doubtless felt "a drift in the times." He has been compelled, as churchman and citizen, toward popularizing and clarifying his language, even though he has not descended to simplifying his metaphysical vision. But that his address has broadened is obvious. One has only to recollect his essays on poetic drama in *The Sacred Wood,* or his remarks on poetic popularity in the study of Tennyson in his new book *Essays Ancient and Modern,* to be aware of his long-standing inclination to enlist the moral support and affirmation of a wide human public.

There remains the question of which of these two kinds of poetry—the personal and allegorical or the more human and explicit—he shows greater mastery in. "Ash Wednesday" and *Murder in the Cathedral* are brilliant achievements. They may bear the more lasting signs of poetic authority. They rise above that poetic value which is restricted to the circle of initiates. But Eliot's creative temperament still stands in its original and fundamental quality in the poems before 1925, and is corroborated there by the essays of the same period. Moreover, those earlier poems were in their way primary creations. They embodied a specific poetic method, and the form of the poems exactly conveyed the matter presented and the kind of experience defined. In later works the hortatory or penitential style is often weakened by such pastiche of his own earlier manner as mars the pages of *The Rock*. Humor and skepticism now seem to sprout artifically from the thicker stem of religious faith, and we are left uncertain of just what is essential and what is not.

Neither Robert Frost nor Marianne Moore has encountered these extreme needs and distresses of "growth." They possessed their characteristic manners from the beginning of their public careers, and maintain them inimitably down to the present moment. They have met no necessity of adapting or changing their styles in order to sustain public interest, since one of them discovered a permanent hold on popular approval from the start, and the other has found none whatever. Both have published sparely: Frost's new volume, *A Further Range,* is his first in eight years, and Miss Moore's luxurious book adds only five new poems to the eleven additions she made last year in her *Selected Poems*. At every point their talents diverge except in their consistency of purpose. Frost practices his readable art of homely phrase and tough Yankee shrewdness; Miss Moore exercises again the severely calculated technique of an uncompromising originality.

Frost's new poetry does not differ essentially from his earliest in *A Boy's Will*. If it has advanced beyond the delicate sensibility of that charming volume, it does so by the sharper accent of its eccentricity, and by an exchange of younger impressions for the cannier skepticisms of maturity. His work from the beginning has described the provincial hinter-

land of the American conscience; it has worked out its salvation far removed from literary fashions and the discords of intellectual society. It has profited by the same kind of stoic detachment that Robinson employed in holding to his viewpoint. Frost's foreword to Robinson's posthumous volume of last fall, *King Jasper,* was an interesting indication of how these two men formed their judgments of the modern world without ever mixing in its perils. Frost praised Robinson for having a sense not of life's grievances but of its grief. This meant an estrangement from the rebel generation now around him, and stated his belief that individual tragedy is more essential to a poet's purposes than the ephemeral passions of mass protest. Thus he still concentrates upon the humblest figments and minutiae of human wit or misery, writing largely within his own rumination, and employing the *sotto voce* of conversations with himself. When he says in "Ten Mills" that

> I never dared be radical when young
> For fear it would make me conservative when old

he shows himself temperamentally a noncombatant, a tolerant pacifist. This is both a sound and a cynical view of the destiny of human causes; it is a view capable of shrewd wisdom but rather dry poetry. And in *A Further Range* his fortitude unfortunately takes on in many poems the rather complacent mock-innocence already hinted at in *West Running Brook.*

The time particularly needs genuine disinterestedness in its poets, and Frost stands beyond all suspicion of the risks or histrionics of political activity, but the question rises whether he describes the human conscience in a form sufficiently robust to bring his insight to mean much beyond a personal satisfaction in honesty, or even a discreet contempt of more reckless forms of honor. There is here no discernible advance in his powers. He includes poems of trivial oddity like "A Record Stride," and gnomic bits of philosophy like "The White-Tailed Hornet" and "At Woodward's Gardens." There is comparatively little to rival his finest work, but a good deal to make one fear that a certain vanity has bred stiffness in his sympathies and vision. The poet, in other words, has sunk beyond a safe degree into that unconscious animal patience which characterizes his New England farmers. He shares their obliviousness of keener struggles instead

of treating it, in the manner of Hardy, as a symptom of heroic trust. Frost's best work resists such reproof fully; it made classic use of the spiritual temperament of the American peasant. Here there are signs that this moment of classic realization has passed. Uncritical indulgence has allowed pieces of dull writing and petulant wisdom to enter this volume. There are, however, some poems of great beauty, notably the sonnet "Master Speed":

> No speed of wind or water rushing by
> But you have speed far greater. You can climb
> Back up a stream of radiance to the sky,
> And back through history up the stream of time.—
> And you were given this swiftness not for haste,
> Nor chiefly that you may go where you will,
> But in the rush of everything to waste,
> That you may have the power of standing still—
> Of any still or moving thing you say.
> Two such as you with such a master speed
> Cannot be parted nor be swept away
> From one another once you are agreed
> That life is only life forevermore
> Together wing to wing and oar to oar.

Marianne Moore never betrays the temerity or distraction of an open interpreter, and yet no recent poet has attempted a more complex presentation of the modern intelligence and its problems. She states but never explains. In her method all is implicit, and the discourse that ramifies her poems is not allowed to mar the objectifications she makes of plants, animals, and inanimate nature. These have become her private system of symbols, and their symbolism is not intuitive but rigidly intellectual. I have lately discussed (in *The New Republic* and *Poetry*) that symbolism as it appears to me, and Mr. Blackmur (in *The Double Agent*) and Mr. Burke (in *The Southern Review*) have discussed her technical method. It is sufficient to note here that in these five poems she makes further use of both—in a poem on the ideal of the Old Dominion as embodied in the houses and gardens of Virginia, in two on birds, one on the butterfly, and

one on the pangolin ("another armoured animal . . . near artichoke with head and legs and grit-equipped gizzard, the night miniature artist-engineer"). These again become opportunities for focusing all she knows and feels about man and visible nature through the lens of an exhaustive, prodigiously reflective sympathy. Again we see these minutely examined phenomena converted into means for concentrating the immense resources of scientific observation, and thus for restoring to the reader his lost sense of compassion and value. Among modern poets Miss Moore is the most completely unprejudiced in her handling of such human needs, but she is also the most severe in defining what these needs are and the moral intelligence which man must bring to their satisfaction. Hers is a particularly exact version of the modern problem—exact because it discards all surface pathos and convention in favor of a pure realization of values. Moreover she has been one of the few living poets to bring a seminal energy into poetry, and this merit alone will keep her work alive quite independently of popular attention.

Four books listed here illustrate how ineffectually a poet works when he has no power to state his emotions in a form of his own, or objectify them in a language of exact poetic meaning. They come either from writers who have no creative appreciation of what they call "a respect for tradition" and thus no talent for lifting tradition above the banal (Gilbert Maxwell in *Stranger's Garment* and F. L. Lucas in *Poems, 1935*), or from writers whose imaginative poverty deprives them of any power to get beyond their commonplace home-truths and proverbs (Rachel Field in *Fear Is the Thorn* and Patrick Moreland in *Seven Song*). Mr. Maxwell is the most fluent among these; he has several poems of fresh and spirited feeling. Miss Field has the best common sense and charm of character; her homilies sometimes show the witty gravity of Lizette Reese. Mr. Moreland has no ear whatever for sounds or cadences, no eye for images, and usually very slight taste, redeeming himself occasionally by a touch of dramatic understatement as in "Sun-Up" or "Bathsheba." Mr. Lucas is the fire-eating defender of the Victorians and scourge of their detractors. He writes a preface in heated contempt of post-War verse, and equally warm faith that "the older forms are not yet exhausted and dead." He makes statements

like "I think that much modern poetry is not merely foolish but diseased"—true enough until it is realized that he infallibly talks about the wrong cases. The greatest optimism he shows, beyond pleasure in his own work, is in believing that English poetry "will revive one day the stronger for its winter sleep." He boasts as much freedom from political dogmatism ("I am not a Marxist or a Nazi") as from fear of what sophisticated reviewers may think of his book ("It seems to me better to know clearly what one thinks; and to know, at the same time, that one only thinks it. Strong feelings, watched by a wakeful dragon of skepticism, may be a firmer basis for life than the reservations of Laodicea"). He has a theory of his own to explain "cerebralism," "escapism," and similar inanities typical of "our Promised Land of soul-searching inwardness" where "poets [are] left to tumble in their mystical hog-troughs or brandish their chromium corkscrews before groups of the faithful."

> Sometimes I wonder if the present cult for difficulty in poetry is not partly due to the decay of classical education. Minds too softly educated on a subject like English crave for something harder to bite on. As fields unploughed grow shagged with thistles, so they blossom into "metaphysical" poetry and metaphysical criticism. But those who have dug through the unavoidable difficulties of a complicated dead language to get at the gold of Pindar and Aeschylus may be less eager to go hunting some shoddy slipper through thorn-hedges of difficulties contrived for difficulty's sake.

There is enough wrong-headed truth in this to make one alert for a gleam of classic gold. What arrives, unmitigated through 150 pages, is something for which "shoddy" becomes a charitable term—squibs, anecdotes, paradoxes, travel-notes, War-memories, fifth-form epigrams, academic satires and translations after Andrew Lang's style, political potshots, and all the dreary catchall of a skittish don's notebook. It is customary, in condescending to Mr. Lucas' creative efforts, to recall that he is "the modern and excellent editor of Webster." This book should absolve the charitable from even that concession toward some of the dullest mediocrity ever issued under the title of verse or criticism. "Writers should do as they please, provided they are pleasing," says Mr. Lucas. This wide-

mindedness overestimates the amiability of the human patience when it opens books like his.

James Reeves' *The Natural Need* and Charlotte Wilder's *Phases of the Moon* may be joined in comment as revealing types of sensibility wholly circumscribed by private introspection. They have little in common in their styles and themes. Mr. Reeves is more at home, as Laura Riding says in her prefatory poem, "where the books like listless keepers cage Self's pacing furies in well-fed rooms." He derives not only from classical and Biblical legend, but from Provençal poets and the echoes of modern city life. At times he plays his variations on English domestic verse, at others on troubadour satire, and again along more modern lines, stressing the sterile aspects of contemporary life. Much of this is verse-exercising. His book carries the overtones of a Proustian inertia. He observes, ponders, and pities the discreetly revealed world around him. His images dissolve about the fringes of a central haze, sometimes achieving a tremulous fragility, sometimes trailing wisps of erudition, in the end receding into the vague graces of mere urbanity. These poems are praised for capturing a "serenity" uncommon in recent verse. They use symbols (paintings, Mozart, the English summer, the "frosted glass" of the winter sky) that express the poet's flight from contemporary stupidity and violence. Miss Riding considers that he arrives at a "happy understanding" in these matters, and avoids the "brawny dream" or "starving rapture" of more heated brains. This points to his type. Far removed from the Auden-Lewis circle, he has produced several pleasant poems, but he practices chiefly a sort of charming connoisseurship among the pleasures and secrecies of a civilized mind. Also his style is unstable. He veers from one manner to another, from imagism to satire, or from pathos to cleverness. If his book is superior to the average lyrics of the English school, it is under that much greater obligation to bring its wit and taste to more sincere uses than are visible in its pages.

There can be no question about the sincerity of Miss Wilder's book. It is a barely disguised history of physical and emotional frustration, and aims toward sublimating the consequences. This problem entails the ultimate in self-analysis and discipline. When the medium for its solution happens to be poetry, there can be no form too severe or phrasing too rigor-

ous for certifying an honest intention. Moreover, the means of defining such a problem involve, by the nature of the case, an extreme detachment if any control of the ordeal is to be achieved. Such detachment might come through symbols, myth, a formal style, or a severe lyric vision—through almost any usage but the worrying iterations and vortexes of this semi-prose speech Miss Wilder has fashioned. Her paragraphs of structureless overlapping phrases, suffused by mystifications and reticences, are continually weakened by redundancy and the running period. They directly oppose any art that one might call (at whatever risk of bad critical form) therapeutic. In two stanzaic lyrics, "O Beauty, tyrant of our tears" and "O, she must sleep," Miss Wilder shows both formal beauty and a delicacy of perception that should have instructed her more safely in a task which her present method has rendered not only mortifying but impossible. "I am the sole speech of my desolate certitude; name me no mysticism." This statement offers an austere integrity of motive, but it proves both inadequate and miscalculated as applied in this book.

Archibald MacLeish's *Public Speech,* a book of twenty short poems, is, as its title implies, a further moderation of the hostility he once directed against "the social cant" in contemporary poetry. It carries him beyond *Panic* in his compromise with the forces on the literary left. For five years he made himself useful to these critics (particularly with his *Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City*) as a prime object for proletarian abhorrence. His education toward economic concerns came by way of a familiar post-War routine. Exile in Paris bred him in the tragic humors then fashionable as symptoms of the modern man's disinheritance. He joined up with the lost generation and wrote variations on "Gerontion" and "The Waste Land." He explored the refuges of literature in his *Hamlet,* of scientific ultimates in his "Einstein," of personal and racial memory in *New Found Land.* Later still he sought out the solace of the heroic tradition in *Conquistador.* But apparently his radical critics were right in scoffing at these false hopes: MacLeish returned from them more abjectly dispossessed than ever, and found his conscience stricken by what had happened to society in the meantime. He quickly tackled the corruptions of the economic order, and made a truce with his enemies more smoothly than he perhaps expected. His

earlier attempts to lose himself in abstract human suffering or even among the interstellar spaces now proved to be a good preparation for joining in the class struggle. His favorite virtue, humility, eased him over the transition, and his favorite tones of elegiac grief, once so appropriate to the writing of epitaphs on his own buried life, now lend themselves to celebrating the death-pangs of caste and capitalism. In *Public Speech* he offers his past experience in spiritual suffering as a guidance "to those who say Comrade":

> The brotherhood is not by the blood certainly
> But neither are men brothers by speech—by saying so:
> Men are brothers by life lived and are hurt for it:
>
> Hunger and hurt are the great begetters of brotherhood:
> Humiliation has gotten much love:
> Danger I say is the nobler father and mother.
>
> Those are as brothers whose bodies have shared fear
> Or shared harm or shared hurt or indignity.
> Why are the old soldiers brothers and nearest?

As such a veteran he enlists, retaining the Gerontion-Tiresias robes he wore so fondly in the past. In a poem which he calls a note to Arnold's "Dover Beach" he renounces his former alliance with the philosophers of exile and escape:

> After forty a man's a fool to wait in the
> Sea's face for the full force and the roaring of
> Surf to come over him: droves of careening water.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Speaking alone for myself it's the steep hill and the
> Toppling lift of the young men I am toward now—
> Waiting for that as the wave for the next wave.
> Let them go over us all I say with the thunder of
> What's to be next in the world.

Thus he turns his face from the disenchanted past to the hopeful future. It will be noticed that he does so without loss of his meek tones or the dying fall of his cadences as they swoon gently toward their recessed rhymes and feminine endings.

It may be suspected, after his former retreats into the regions of memory, science, and history, that the class struggle holds out one more refuge for that moral evasion which his style has come to suggest. In about half these new poems he continues the vein of bewilderment and dispossession so wearisomely stressed in *New Found Land* and *Conquistador*. The theme of the book, "Love that hardens into hate," seems a rather facile derivation from a famous doctrine of Yeats. But to those who have respected MacLeish's real quality in earlier works, it is encouraging to see this (particularly the satiric vigor of *Streets of the Moon)* reappear on several pages. It shows in "The German Girls!" and "Speech to the Detractors," and in three divisions of the closing poem, "The Woman on the Stair" ("The Absence," "The Treachery," and "The Second Love"). These have the sombre pathos of his best lyrics. There is still an easy-going reiteration of the themes of love and sacrifice, but love here rises above the laxity of a racial abstraction and becomes once more the responsible emotion it should be. By this time, of course, one must be resigned or nothing to MacLeish's style as a patent derivation from Pound and Eliot. "The Woman on the Stair," for example, descends straight from "La Figlia che Piange," recasting that poem's tragedy into such phrases as "her serious mouth nor pitiful hair/Nor his mouth mortal with the murderous need." But in these cases the derivation does not enfeeble its sources, and often arrives at a very moving beauty. There are also signs that this congenital habit of understudy is being invigorated through several stylists not consulted in MacLeish's earlier studies. His poem to Phelps Putnam improves that poet's rugged movement by a rhythm that clearly refers to Hopkins:

> Christ but this earth goes over to the squall of time!
> Hi but she heels to it—rail down: ribs down: rolling
> Dakotas under her hull! And the night climbing
> Sucking the green from the ferns by these Berkshire boulders!

In a style that has grown toward the mesmerizing sameness of MacLeish's epics and elegies, such echoes of more robust writers come as a decided stimulus. He is still willing to descend to a kind of silly affectedness in his manner; it comes out at its worst in the subtitle of "Words to be Spoken," in the theme-song repetitions of "Pole Star for this Year," and

on the appalling dedication page of *Panic*. But serious craftsmanship and a sense of practical ordeal will make his new alliance with poets of the social struggle a matter of mutual benefit. His new book may seem a rather obvious way of inviting the indulgence of the unconverted, but it is a signal of profitable intentions. Public speech is exactly what his poems have needed for a long time as a corrective of their fatigue and self-commiseration. When a poet arrives at the limits of aesthetic experience or an impasse of spiritual emptiness, a turn toward external objects comes as a new lease on life.

The six Marxist poets on our list—five Americans and one Englishman—show a considerable range of talent, and may be arranged in an ascending order of quality: Paul Engle, Kenneth Patchen, Stanley Burnshaw, Norman Macleod, Edwin Rolfe, and C. Day Lewis. I believe this indicates not only their poetic intelligence, but its penetration of the enormous claims of their subject matter. It may also indicate the maturity of their study of the philosophy underlying their poems, and their grasp of the technical processes for mastering it. At present we cannot inquire into that. The only evidence at hand (leaving aside the three essays Lewis includes in his miscellany) is the poetic. Leftist verse may be no more guilty than other varieties of leaning on doctrines outside of poetry, nor is its value as argument and evidence lessened by the fact that it often requires consideration (or combination) along with expository essays and apologies. In its present state of propagandist employment (and what is obviously its immature development) such defenses have educational value not only for members of the left but for outsiders. Lewis has some sensible remarks in his essay "Revolutionaries and Poetry" which may be quoted here in order to curtail this discussion, although he intends them as instruction for his fellow-believers. They would obviously suffer if placed in a more philosophical setting, but they come much to the point during the heat and muddled rancor that attends discussions of this kind.

> First, we must guard against that form of literary sentimentality which would accept any piece of verse evidently written from a revolutionary standpoint and reject everything written from any other angle. The first qualification of a poem is that it should be a good

> poem—technically good . . . Secondly, we must not expect a revolutionary poet to write about nothing but the revolution . . . Thirdly, even when he is writing directly from a revolutionary stimulus, we must not expect the result to be the same as our slogans and our pamphlets: we must not look for *direct* propaganda. A poem appeals to the mass through the individual: a slogan, a political speech, appeals to the individual through the mass. Poetry is of its nature more personal than "straight" propaganda: the latter is the heavy artillery, the former is the hand-to-hand fighting . . . Lastly, what we must ask of our own poets is this: not that they should litter the surface of their poems with red symbols . . . nor with slogans and catchwords . . . nor even that they should be always writing about the class-struggle . . . [but] that they should thoroughly assimilate Marxism through theory and practical activity . . . Our attitude, then, towards those poets who declare themselves revolutionaries should be one of friendly but severe criticism.

The fundamentalism of these remarks, applied to any class of purposive verse, may be embarrassing to the educated mind, but such fundamentalism recurs periodically in literary apologetics. The above is no cruder, no less helpful, and no more final than Shelley's *Defense,* Synge's preface to his *Poems and Translations,* and Pound's *Dont's by an Imagist.* At present it simplifies what one wishes to say about the problems of radical verse and the qualities of the six books at hand.

Engle's *Break the Heart's Anger* advertizes his conversion from the *American Song* to "the brotherhood of man, which he has previously proclaimed but now carries beyond its spiritual bounds to its social and economic demands." This phenomenon is worth serious inspection, for it comes as a source of pleasure to many persons who have no interest in the fact that, as a work of art, the book is a cause for alarm only. Even Lewis' remarks are insufficiently simple to help Engle greatly. His entire volume is a stupefying onslaught of the heavy artillery of propagandist emotion, irredeemable in its sentimentality and barbarous in its technical means. Its verbal hysteria can really be as little convincing to believers as to skeptics, for it destroys every vestige of sensibility or intelligence that either poetry or faith must have. There is no use taking these chunks of

rhetoric apart to examine their detail: "you could as well dissipate a fog by flinging hand-grenades into it." Given Engle's emotional blindness and disrespect for taste, anything he chooses to throw into his book is acceptable—slang, diatribe, grandiloquence, prophecy, cheap witticisms, cheaper sanctimony, and a chaotic welter of geographical terms, literary allusions, proper names, and distorted maxims. This is poetry written out of a mere brute capacity for sensation and disorder. The disorder exists in the present state of the world, but no poet can feast on it. Engle's gift for rapid-fire phrasing seems impressive until nine-tenths of his phrases show up as the shoddy stuff of journalism or the soap-box poet. Critics have also spoken of his power of movement, but this is of little use as long as directed toward no purpose. If the human triumph for which he shouts ever arrives, Engle will doubtless be as little aware of it as he now is of the chaos to which he has reduced his sounds, words, and sensations.

Kenneth Patchen has a good deal of Engle's looseness and lack of discrimination, profiting however by the lesser bulk of his output, by greater astuteness in organizing his effects, and by more delicacy in handling his sensory materials. These last he sometimes abuses as harshly as he cheapens his style. At one moment he says "we hear the dark curve of eternity go coughing down the hills," and at another he rephrases some of Burns' lines to Mary as "Comrades, the Red Woman! she is the timeless bride of all our loving." This tends toward Engle's gasping eloquence. Patchen also makes patchworks of journalistic montage like "Joe Hill listens to the praying" or routine sermons like "Chant: Not a Solo but a Scene of Action." All this results in great harm to the tone of his book. His pieces jangle with clashing inflections. Even a short poem of twelve lines rattles with its disorganization of pathetic lines, sarcastic, tender, brutal, and with pretentious dialectic phrases. When the poem is longer, this incoherence becomes worse. Generally his phrases have a more sensitive quality when isolated, and if Patchen would take his talent more simply this gift might serve him better. His greatest sin is the trickery he inflicts on his forms, titles, spacings, and even syntax. These devices may be very tempting in Auden or MacLeish, but no apprenticeship in verse is more deceptive than that which follows eccentricities of syntax or typography. Poets like Hopkins, Pound, and Marianne Moore are beyond imitation in this respect,

and the trick becomes all the more crippling when derived from belaborers of patented devices like Cummings, Aragon, MacLeish, or the young English school. Patchen's work is chiefly composed of episodes and lyric fits; the organization is a business of cutting and pasting. Study three-fourths of its entries in isolation and their flimsiness is apparent. Patchen's talent may sometime become aware of its more sensitive inclinations and undertake the proper discipline. Thus far it rests at an amateur level.

Burnshaw's book also insists on a continuity among its items. The foreword warns the reader that "this is not a collection of unrelated records in verse . . . Since individual passages are conceived as progressive episodes, chronological reading is essential. *The Iron Land* tells a story of a contemporary steel mill seen with the eyes of a young middle-class white collar employee. It records his personal growth through workaday experiences (poems printed in roman type) as well as through personal doubts, deliberations, escapes (poems printed in italics), into a new-world directive." The parts are alternately dramatic, impressionistic, lyric, and didactic, ending with an "Invocation to the Unrisen." The redeeming feature of Patchen's work is its visual effects. Burnshaw tends toward the explicit and explanatory, and if, as in many of the steel-mill episodes, he tries to create a tangible image or dramatic moment, he does so with a literalness that compels no real sympathy or belief. Often he does this, moreover, with a painful crudity of detail:

> Afternoon: to stage the setting again,
> Working now with cranes and gangs of millhands
> Juggling with beams to place them
> In focus for the black box.
> Cranes and blocks and chains and gangs and foremen
> Swaddled in grime, sweating the hours through;
> And in the sweating, bending, straining, lifting,
> With wheels and torches drawing their keen sounds,
> A fierce tenseness gripped the shed: a screaming
> Tenseness of power-and-fire never releasing . . .

Such writing is conceivably useful in a novel, but it has no source in a poetic idea. Endless accumulations of it would never arrest the imagination. The same documentary obviousness exists in the colloquial or horta-

tory poems. In only two of his manners—the anecdotal ("I, Jim Rogers") and the lyrical ("Rediscovery," "Meditation at Midnight") does Burnshaw write to real poetic effect; elsewhere his poems remain marginal, allusive, dependent in the wrong way on the larger scheme of the book. Acknowledgment must be made to his powers of restraint and selection, and to the fact that he does not depend on those shocks of wild physical sensation now a common stock and a commoner bore among writers who boast that this indicates a grip on life.

Macleod's *Thanksgiving before November* is another installment of his remembrance of things past. When he recalls his boyhood or western youth, he presents images of a very moving quality. Pieces like "Against Winter Harvest," "Homestead in Alberta," "Rainy Seasons of the Heart," and "Fishing in Summer" give fresh detail, keen sensory memories, and an intimate quality that are very appealing. They are fragmentary and cinematic, but clearly and honestly felt. As poetry they are usually formless, and suggest that they might be better employed in prose stories. When Macleod turns to matters of belief, he becomes both bogus and unreadable. He then unloads a confused and involved kind of verbiage, full of hollow abstractions and efforts to seem philosophical. Whether he has any idea of what he is saying is never clear: the lofty phrases trip up each other's heels and mental blankness sets in.

> Conquest all individual sorrow, so questionable
> To our need, and conscript the hard gravel
> Of our bones into the brilliancy of bayonets.
> It is to each single one of us the tip
> Of rebellious flame that brands the drawn
> Tendons of the forearm. The rift between pain
> And fact is a consolation. Let misery go,
> And we will remain the object of victory . . .

This is little more than automatic writing—a description appropriate to much of Macleod's prodigious output. When the matter evoked is that of personal experience or association, this mechanism may work successfully, for Macleod's memory is lively and honest. When he tries to draw a more objective form of statement from the recesses of consciousness, the result is little better than a trance of words. What his verse wants is concentra-

tion, reticence, and reduction to a small fraction of its present bulk. The resultant economy might reveal virtues of realism and intuition now lost in mere spasms and flashes of thought.

Lewis and Rolfe hold out a surer attraction. They are writers of reasonable and persuasive habits, not of instinct; of practical logic rather than intuitive vision. This may mean that they will never arrive at what Lewis hopes for: a new myth to embody the social ideal of the future. In spite of Lewis' talent for formidable allegory in *The Magnetic Mountain,* and of Rolfe's occasional flashes of intense feeling, neither is a poet of great capacities for allegory, or for the long reach of an ideal conception. They are poets of practical habits; neither talks out of his head, or works under the propulsion of physical sensation and driving frenzy of the Engle order. Lewis' tendency is toward a deceptive simplification of his arguments. He is primarily the pedagogue among English communists. What Spender and Auden achieve by lyric or symbolic methods, he works out by plainer allegory. His three essays on proletarian verse are, as I said above, elementary to an unselfprotective degree, clarifying matters neatly so long as matters are not examined too closely. Sometimes this results in works of easy pedantry like the "choral ballet," *"Noah and the Waters,"* (reminding one rather of Maeterlinck's demonstrations); again in the singsong facility of ballads like "Johnny Head-in-Air." But when it comes to poems of definite argument ("In Me Two Worlds," "The Conflict," "Losers") Lewis' intelligence emerges, loses its somewhat histrionic simplicity, and becomes vigorous. He has not the shrewd aesthetic or metaphysical ability of Auden. Beside the virtuosity of *The Orators* and *The Dog Beneath the Skin* he shows up as pedestrian; but what he loses in smartness and preciosity (Spender's disagreeable side) he gains in candid persuasiveness. He has the further virtue of indicating that he has only begun to use these properties toward their full uses. *A Time to Dance* is an interim in his career. What succeeds it may determine the future fate of this kind of poetry in England.

Edwin Rolfe holds the same position in America. Of the younger revolutionary talents here he promises most for the literary strength of the cause. His book also has its pedestrian aspects, and again they come with a kind of distinction after the flashier qualities of some of his colleagues.

He keeps his feet on the ground and his ear close to the speech of his contemporaries: they are rightly addressed in his title, for Rolfe uses their language and mental habits, eschewing the portentous cries of warning or prophecy, and speaking with a kind of deadly seriousness that has its unquivocal power. "Winds of Another Sphere" and "Testament to a Flowering Race" appeal to me more than the longer poems. In the latter his argument sprawls and leans too much on the surrounding context without involving it in a sound structural organization; here also the prosaic defects of Rolfe's style overassert themselves and vitiate—with their excess of deliberation and matter-of-fact sobriety—the passion that ought to stir his final summons to arms, "To my Contemporaries." It is also impossible for me to believe that what he states in "Credo" can ever lead either to good poetry or to a more responsible human order; but the clear-headed intensity of "Definition" is a sign of powers that must impress even the skeptical:

> Knowing this man, who calls himself comrade,
> mean, underhanded, lacking all attributes
> real men desire, that replenish all worlds
> men strive for; knowing that charlatan, fool too,
> masquerading always in our colors, must also
> be addressed as comrade—knowing these
> and others to be false, deficient in knowledge
> and love for fellow men that motivates our kind,
> nevertheless I answer the salutation proudly,
> equally sure that no one can defile it,
> feeling deeper than the word the love it bears,
> the world it builds. And no man, lying,
> talking behind back, betraying trustful friend,
> is worth enough to soil this word or mar this world.

This is the firmest position yet revealed among the younger social writers, and leaves them with the task not only of realizing their purposes, but of profiting by what has been achieved in poetic skill and intelligence during the generations immediately behind them.

FASHIONS IN THE SEASON'S FICTION

Howard Baker

TWENTY NEW novels, no one an unmistakable masterpiece, no one so bad as not to have found a publisher, provide a pretty fair sample of what writers and publishers are offering this season. Masterpieces, of course, are rare; even so it is remarkable that these books, with a few exceptions, are no better than they are, and it is still a little more remarkable that most of them are so bad. Fashions in writing, obviously, have their day and then go the way of fashions. For the serious reader, however, the merely fashionable book is a bad book. Most of these books are merely fashionable. Yet I am confident that not one of the present authors consciously wanted to produce only a fashionable piece of work.

This is a curious state of affairs. Can it be that the authors themselves do not know what they are doing? To a certain extent they probably do

Edmond Peyré, by C. B. Roberts. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co. $2.00. *Savages and Saints*, by Mrs. Fremont Older. New York: E. P. Dutton. $2.50. *Golden Peacock*, by Gertrude Atherton. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. $2.50. *The Iron Will*, by Margaret Culkin Banning. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.00. *Day of Victory*, by Mary Barrow Linfield. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran. $2.50. *A Time for Love*, by Ramona Herdman. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.00. *The Moon's No Fool*, by Thomas Matthews. London: Constable and Co. 7/6. *Saturday to Monday*, by Patrick Carleton. New York: E. P. Dutton. $2.50. *Blessed Above Women*, by Pamela Hansford Johnson. New York: Harcourt, Brace. $2.00. *The Golden Heart*, by Richard Strachey. New York: Harcourt, Brace. $2.00. *A Mistake Somewhere*, Anonymous. London:

not: it is easy for a writer to be so occupied with minor manifestations of his originality that he loses sight of general power and scope and meaning—requisites without which his work cannot surpass the temporarily fashionable. Every writer, moreover, is entitled, and even obliged, to imitate; literary monuments are seldom utterly lonely. But the novelist, unfortunately, is all too likely not to be judicious in his choice of what he imitates. It is not altogether his fault; he gets caught in a vicious circle.

What happens most often is that a novel, possibly because of its genuine originality, probably because of its novelty, chances to have good sales. Immediately publishers want more books of the same kind; promptly the popular critics want to discover similar geniuses. In the present group of novels, for instance, three of the very least carry large, smooth endorsements signed by names that are far from unfamiliar—J. B. Priestly, Louis Bromfield, Burton Rascoe, William Rose Bénet; and in these honors Mr. Rascoe scores twice. Then the reading public, in its turn, imagines that it is really interested in what, by sheer coercive weight, has become a "new literary tendency." And the bubble swells merrily until it bursts.

Such is the life cycle of the more important literary fashions. Needless to say we are concerned here with a peculiarly modern phenomenon—a life cycle acutely attuned to sales. The sales themselves of a chosen book are swollen by all the amazing mechanics of publicity; the reviewing journals of New York can be moved overnight by pressure from a book store or two in Dallas, Texas, or San Francisco; the day after a radio address, sales may leap through the thousands. Care in the selection of books, study of them, contemplation, judgment—the roots of sound taste—there is no

Constable and Co. 7/6. *The House in Paris,* by Elizabeth Bowen. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50. *Stubborn Roots,* by Elma Godchaux. New York: The Macmillan Co. $2.50. *The Cherry Bed,* by Karlton Kelm. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. $2.50. *Death Is a Little Man,* by Minnie Hite Moody. New York: Julian Messner, Inc. $2.50. *I'll Mourn You Later,* by Catherine Whitcomb. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co. $2.00. *They Seldom Speak,* by Leland Hall. New York: Harcourt, Brace. $2.50. *The Abandoned Wood,* by Monique Saint-Hélier. New York: Harcourt, Brace. $2.50. *The Green Lion,* by Francis Hackett. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran. $2.50. *Doctor Morath,* by Max René Hesse. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co. $2.50.

mercy for them in this storm. It is little wonder that authors are carried away by sterile fashions.

These remarks are occasioned by the conviction that the books at hand are in the main disappointing, and that, if the present season's foibles had not been bred into them, they would be better. We shall attend principally to the question of foibles: if these twenty novels fit into three neat parcels, as they do indeed seem to fit, and if the same impotences in organization and the same trickeries in style crop up again and again, then we have discovered a mere literary fashion, something perishable, and, once recognized, dull.

If the reader, feeling that these propositions are too sweeping and perhaps not quite magnanimous, refuses to read farther, let him depart knowing that at least two of the twenty books are by no means disappointments—*The House in Paris* by Elizabeth Bowen is not, nor is *Doctor Morath* by Max René Hesse.

I

The romances, up to a certain point, can easily be investigated. A romance—to suggest a loose definition—is a work in fiction in which the scenes and incidents are more or less remote from ordinary life. A romance, too, is usually a tale which its author is only too likely to call "colorful"; it is glamorous and adventurous, often slipping over into the supernatural. Not infrequently it employs a symbolism which the author himself may, or may not, understand or even recognize. It aims at entertainment: and therein lies the difficulty. For what is entertaining is an extremely relative matter; that which entertains one man bores another. The best that can be done is to ask what a good, thoughtful, experienced reader finds entertaining; for it is to be assumed that a thoughtful reader does not lose his mind even when he is being entertained; he is likely, to the contrary, to be highly entertained indeed by, say, *Sir Perceval of Galles* or *Alice in Wonderland*.

Edmond Peyré, the hero who gives his name to C. B. Roberts' romantic novel, is scarcely a Sir Perceval, though his fortunes do bear some resemblance to those of an Arthurian hero. At the end of the past century, our romance recounts, Edmond was born an illegitimate son to Major Cassius Langdon of New Orleans. The Major's wife, a selfish society

woman, refusing the Major a divorce, blocks the Major's plan to marry Edmond's mother. At the age of fifteen or so, Edmund crosses paths with his villainous, older half brother. Attacked by this bully, he has his glasses broken, his eyelid disfigured, and, overwhelmed by a sense of disgrace, he flees to France, where eventually he becomes under another name a great man of letters and a great hero of the World War. Later on, who should appear in New Orleans but a famous man who, after tender suspense, makes his true identity known to his dear ones?—It is Edmond, with eyelid repaired by surgery! At the same time there shows up another man virtually in disguise; it is the half brother, now indeed a thoroughly murderous villain, who has come just in time to give Edmond plenty of trouble. But virtue comes off triumphant; the good are united in happiness, the bad go to their miserable deaths.

The thoughtful reader, I imagine, will not be much entertained by these events. For coincidence and mistaken identity as they are used in this book are utterly shoddy. It is not a question of what is believable and not believable, for even the supernatural is acceptable in literature. But the supernatural is subject to law. The reader of the Arthurian romances deliberately assumes a certain faith in the processes of Celtic mythology; the reader of *Hamlet*, for the time being, not only believes in ghosts but is governed by the law that the devil sometimes masquerades as a ghost. The reader of *Edmond Peyré,* on the other hand, refuses to put a repaired eyelid in the category of Siegfried's *Tarnkappe*.

Such fiction as this confuses the real world with a dwarfed abstract world. New Orleans is not New Orleans. It is a series of vague courts with magnolia blossoms and "enchanting Old World flavour." Men are ghosts of King Arthur's train or ghosts of murderous bullies. The style of *Edmond Peyré* is also ghostlike, reminiscent of laborious translations of French novels, as faded as a pressed flower:

> So, she marvelled when he had gone, this tall, elegant gentleman . . . was the noted Major Cassius Langdon, . . . man of polished contacts, personage in the city's life. . . . And she had seen this simple unassuming man, shaken his hand, talked with him! His noble features and distinguished bearing lingered in her memory.

In one way this is really an interesting book; it raises a question which Cervantes, for one, and Flaubert, for another, found of immense consequence—what precisely is the spiritual effect of the romance? Have not people addicted to it fallen, here in our own times and world, under an enchantment which is sapping and insidious?

Mrs. Fremont Older, in *Savages and Saints,* also attempts by using similar devices an unhealthy enchantment. We are to imagine that a young priest in the middle of the last century fled from Majorca, after an affair with a countess, into the wilds of California. When the priest has built up a ruined mission, it happens that the countess, now a princess, comes as a guest to a preposterous house in the region. The two overcome the temptations of love, and the countess becomes a nun. The tale is decorated with a bandit and posses, with notes on wild life, and with wealthy aristocrats from Europe.

But the core of the book offers a simple and clear-cut problem. It is the question of essential motivations. The story turns on the fact that an ascetic's mortifying belt worn by the priest prevents him and the countess from yielding at last to the demands of the flesh. The countess, on discovering the belt, says,

> "I felt it. I know something was different. . . . That girdle has power. I don't know what it is—something stronger than I."

The belt, in other words, is an amulet; it is sheer irresponsible magic. Equally irresponsible is the passion which the magic dispels. The passion began thus:

> Here Padre Pedro first saw her, a being of fragrance, flowers, lace, with a flash of golden hair. When she looked at him they were impelled to speak. In mystical recognition they met. It was natural and unescapable as the wooing of humming birds in the magnolia in the Archduchess's garden.

Now, if people are subject to such inescapable mystic seizures, then only one thing can follow: rational conduct is impossible. This is the manipulation by which the woman in this story becomes a nun and the wayward priest a saint.

Gertrude Atherton, with the aid of the experience gained in writing thirty-nine books, holds basic motivation of romance within her control. In *Golden Peacock* the reader is asked to give credence only to extravagant adventure and extraordinary prowess on the part of the heroine. This heroine, a young Roman girl named Pomponia, manages single-handed to thwart a tremendous conspiracy against Augustus Caesar. But as acceptable as prowess and adventure are in romance, Pomponia is far from convincing. She is not of a piece. She is as kittenish as a Clara Bow. She is as shrewd as Sherlock Holmes; indeed, while her male co-workers chase each other around in ludicrous disguises, she cleverly solves the whole conspiracy. She seems to be as physically agile as Tarzan, for she actually takes to a tree in the dead of night and from the branches slashes the cheeks of two chief conspirators, branding them only and not killing them because dead men would not be able to divulge secrets.

We have here, I think, not Rome so much as Hollywood. In the fashion of Cecil De Mille, Mrs. Atherton is devoted to accurate presentation of Roman dress, landmarks, ceremonies, landscapes. Similarly Pomponia is as glib and as well informed as an American college girl (an A student) who has been studying for her examinations. What is not here is a representation of the strict, highly serious genius of Roman civilization and art. The Roman statesmen, for instance, are simply wealthy snobs who believe that the common people care about nothing so long as their "doles are doubled and they are given plenty of money to spend in the wineshops, and the amusements increased." The poet Horace, Pomponia's guardian, is a lovable old dear who makes Pomponia laugh when she sees him in his night cap; she calls him "Uncle Horace."

Pallida Mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas
Regumque turres . . .

Uncle Horace indeed!

Three romances may now be considered together. They deal with the present time and with familiar scenes and situations. Still they have a peculiar remoteness from ordinary life. *The Iron Will,* by Margaret Culkin Banning, deals with a trial in which the government tries to recover taxes from a mining company in Minnesota. An heiress, owner of the mines, who

is in the course of the book redeemed from arrogant ways, swings the case over to a decision favorable to the mining company. Entangled in these events are other events which lead to a happy marriage. This story, as is often true of romances, is noticeably symbolic. It is really about wealth and taxes, the unfairness of taxes, the personal ambitions of attorneys who try to collect them, the wasteful stupidity of the government. The fallacy in the symbolism is that one instance, whether it is presented fairly or not, would not represent the problem of taxation as a whole. Over and against the benefits of taxation Mrs. Banning offers the haphazard generosity of people of wealth, even though she makes her instance of generosity contingent on the utterly casual redemption of the heiress. Aside from the general puerility of psychology, the book is badly written. Conversation is used to give trivial information; the emotional effects of speeches in the courtroom are conveyed by taking the reader on a tour through the brains of the various listeners.

Day of Victory and *A Time for Love,* by Mary Barrow Linfield and Ramona Herdman respectively, are novels about the business man. Miss Linfield tells how a man in a sales office of a lumber company won for himself, in the course of a day, the position of general manager. Miss Herdman tells how a man retained his position as an important magazine editor only because his mistress-assistant refused an opportunity to replace him. The former story has an unmotivated happy ending, the latter an unmotivated sad ending, for both are arbitrary constructions of events. The men in both are simple mechanisms which fill out the plot. Miss Linfield surrounds her hero with innumerable glamorous women, whom she presents in an incredible number of flashbacks. In these flashbacks the sugary writing of her first novel, *Japonica Grove,* reappears:

> . . . and then, like a slender strange young moon rising silently from the unknown, came Imelda, whose smooth gold head one could not, could not, imagine shorn.

As Miss Linfield is flowery, Miss Herdman is trite and flat:

> Mary clung to his arm and they walked close together as they made their way slowly through the crowded streets, stopping every few minutes by a peddler offering his wares.

Miss Herdman also surrounds her hero with stock characters—the selfish society-woman wife, the doting mother, the mistress who wears specifically stylish clothes. The remoteness from life in these last three books derives, I think, from the inclination to confuse a character with an abstract quality. Since Miss Herdman's hero is abstract, it makes no difference whether or not he violates the conventions of romance by trailing after the bad wife rather than the good mistress. In unmotivated romances, sad endings can be just as arbitrary as happy ones.

Thomas Matthews' *The Moon's No Fool* is a fanciful romance, and also, like Miss Herdman's novel, it is a psychological study. In an unidentified country which resembles England, an orphan is adopted into a wealthy family. As he grows up he tries to reconcile his own tradition of Christian morality with a love of worldly success which he acquires from his foster parents. Daydreaming of success turns into hallucination; in a long nightmare he adventures through a caricature of the romantic world which he has longed to possess, and he learns that it is vicious and despicable. In the painful slowness with which he realizes his own errors and those of his society, he is comparable with Ernest in Butler's *Way of All Flesh*. But whereas Ernest is fitted into a most realistic environment, this young man is studied against a deliberately unreal background; the book is written, it seems, in the key of pointless mystery:

> The strange events which cast so prophetic a shadow over my christening. . . .

On the other hand, if this unreality is essential to the book as an allegorical vision, then the ultimate significance of the allegory is, for me at least, extremely puzzling. The types of charlatans are recognizable, but the interminable elaboration of their doings is not significant; there seems to be no indication of what the world *ought* to be. This book, in other words, is a little bit like what *Piers Plowman* would be with the theological paraphernalia omitted. As a psychological study it has the weakness of abstractness, for the young man is limited to one dimension, that of aspiring awkwardness.

II

The psychological novel, now perhaps the favorite form for writers of fiction, was molded into substantially its present shape by one of the great

masters of his craft, Ford Madox Ford; behind Ford's work, of course, lie other monuments like James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Proust's *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*. Ford's *Some Do Not* (1924) is characterized by its compactness in regard to time, by its resolutely dramatic quality, by its explorations of the stream-of-consciousness, and by its use of suggestion—things left half-said, things hinted at in roundabout rhetoric. Like all good techniques these can be imitated badly. After *Some Do Not,* marks of suspension became a fad. . . . The limiting of the span of action in a novel, often to a single day, is still a fad. It appears with pristine artificiality in Miss Linfield's *Day of Victory;* it is possible, of course, only when the crude stuff of the novel possesses extraordinary unity and complexity. The use of the stream-of-conciousness is perhaps nowadays the most damning of all fads.

Stream-of-consciousness—that is, the reproduction in a naturalistic way of the thoughts of a character—is subject in Ford's fiction to certain interesting rules. Ford does not, for instance, tell the thoughts of a character in order to give information; he does not begin a novel by having a woman sit in a bathtub and recall that she was born in Little Rock, and that she was very drunk last night, and that she will have to decide what to do about John. On the contrary, the method is valuable in presenting the color and texture of emotions, the psychical overtones which arise from real action. For Ford is fundamentally a dramatic writer. And this means that the effects of one person upon another are shown objectively, in conversation, in physical movements, in expressions of the face, and not in the manner of Mrs. Banning, by telling, for instance, what each juror is thinking in order to convey to the reader that the heroine is presenting effective testimony. Nor does Ford suddenly shift from the consciousness of one character to another. He gives the thoughts of many people, but objectively, as if from a long perspective; when he identifies himself with a character, when he comes up close—there is no sudden shift to the intimate identity of another person. And above all he does not let an assortment of characters all patter along in the same patterns of thought; he knows that the thoughts of people are as individual as the people themselves.

Most of the authors of our group of psychological novels have not mastered these principles. *Saturday to Monday,* by Patrick Carleton, for

example, is crammed with the figments of many consciousnesses, many of which like to ruminate on caviar. It is a poor book, an unmanly book. A young bank clerk imagines that he is furiously in love with a very crude girl. After an accident at the conclusion of a week-end party and after some very good advice from an older man, the young clerk straightens up. But surely any thoughtful reader of this book is going to say that no young man has the right to be such a puppy in the first place, that such puppyishness is unnatural and unbelievable, and that the boy's story, if he has one, ought to begin with the last page of the present book. One also can suspect that Mr. Carleton, possibly under the influence of Aldous Huxley, is exploiting the glamor of the snares from which his hero makes so extraordinary an escape.

Another psychological novel of this same general type is *Blessed Above Women* by Pamela Hansford Johnson. As a psychological study it centers itself upon a middle-aged, unmarried woman who is more or less unconsciously in love with a young man, a boarder in her house. But actually the bulk of the book is concerned with Bohemian life in London. The young boarder is an aspiring writer; his friends are a dancer, painters, and poets. And so it turns out that a book which is ostensibly about a poor, repressed old maid has a lavish allotment of unhampered sex and drinking and ridiculous talk about the arts. Only readers of this book can have any idea how trivial and dreary are these pages on Bohemian life, with their kisses and interminable moonish conversations. On the other hand the greater part of the treatment of the old maid is genuine, though drawn as if with a powerless hand. The treatment of the old maid's ultimate catastrophe by following the workings of her mind as she slips into madness is not so convincing:

> She knew there was no hope for her; tonight she had nearly gone mad and tomorrow, when her boy was gone, there would be nothing in the world to keep her from going really and truly mad, and mad for ever.

This, certainly, is not the language of catastrophe.

It happens that the two novels just commented on are by young English authors. The remarkable contribution of the English to the present

group of novels is an unmitigated devotion to sex. Richard Strachey's *The Golden Heart,* a sprightly and frivolous little book and not at all dreary, offers the battle cry of what appears to be a new English Youth Movement:

"Yes, I'd make a plea for love, for love as you like it. What harm?"

And Mr. Strachey, after a wealth of cocktail scenes which sparkle with the very latest in English wit, unites Mrs. Brandon with Mr. Coppice, who discover that they copulate quite nicely together, while Mr. Brandon and Miss Cranwell have a no less satisfactory exchange of souls.

And there is ample pleading for love in *A Mistake Somewhere,* an anonymously written account of a devoted young husband and wife and an older woman with whom the young husband falls in love. This book employs a special trick: each person concerned—there is nothing clandestine about the relationships—writes his own account of how things seem to him, the novel itself being these three accounts. And what do these three accounts consist of? Why, naturally, a history of the sex life of each from the time of his earliest adolescence up to the time of the present difficulty. Naturally nothing is solved in the end; naturally each one remains as adolescent at the close of the account as he was in the beginning. And this is quite adolescent. Examine, for instance, the quality of the feeling contained in the following representative passage:

> It was quite late when Christine's mother said, "Come along, Christmas, we must be going."
>
> "Christmas?" I asked, puzzled.
>
> Christine explained—it was an old nickname. Then suddenly it came to me—it seemed so right for her somehow. "Well, I shall call you Noël." It seemed to me that I was making her something of my own with this name.

In spite of perplexing difficulty, there is very little tragedy in this book, for these people are not people so much as vaguely romantic mechanisms.

This new Sex Movement in literature seems to be the outgrowth of the present economic and social situation. If these books are at all sincere (their sincerity is open to doubt), then sex is peculiarly the problem of the economically dislocated. It is poignantly the problem of young bank clerks

who dream of better and different work. It is the problem of Mr. Strachey's psychoanalytic fortune teller, an out-and-out charlatan; it is the illusive Thing in Life for those lesser charlatans, the Bohemians who infest all these books. The converse seems also to be true: sex is not at least a devastating problem for people who are not uprooted from their source of livelihood. As for the social side of the matter, it appears to me to be remarkable, almost unbelievable in fact, that none of these writers even suggests that life in its sexual manifestations, in its artistic and other manifestations, can be subject to discipline. This is to say nothing about the necessity of discipline, nothing about propriety or simple morality—these I suppose lurk forgotten in dusty bookshelves with Milton and Dr. Johnson. I have no desire to be didactic: I am only thinking that the principles which persons and societies induce from experience comprise morality. The eager English investigators of sex seem to be unwilling to tell daylight from dark in this field.

Such are the examples of the psychological novel in its merely fashionable form.

Elizabeth Bowen uses exactly the same stuffs—characters, situations, methods—and makes a really fine book out of them. *The House in Paris* has in detail and outline nearly every virtue that a good novel should have. It possesses excellent mechanical virtues; it possesses, moreover, a quality which goes beyond mechanical virtues but which is probably inseparable from mastery of mechanics. Miss Bowen suggests that she has deliberately and with perfect assurance sought out this quality. At one place in the book she has a sensitive little boy, an illegitimate child, imagine in detail a wonderful interview in which his mother, whom he has never known, would explain to him his own bewildering history. Miss Bowen says concerning the interview between the mother, Karen, and the child, Leopold:

> Actually, the meeting he had projected could take place only in heaven—call it heaven; on the plane of potential, not merely likely behaviour. Or call it art, with truth and imagination informing every word. Only there—in heaven or art, in that nowhere, on that plane—could Karen have told Leopold what had really been.

The peculiar quality about *The House of Paris* is that truth and imagination do inform the words. The characters realize in action all of their potentialities, and thus—such is the grace of art—they are more than ordinarily true to life, they are compacted and made significant by art. And they reveal most convincingly "what had really been."

Mechanically the book is framed in the events of a single day. The child is brought to Paris to see his mother, but the mother fails to keep the appointment. Within this framework extends the narrative of the events which created this bitter, bewildered child. This is a story of an overwhelming, thoughtless, almost unspoken and unacknowledged passion, a passion which is brought to a violent end by the action of an older woman who is jealous of her power over the child's father. The highly involved materials of the book as a whole are handled with beautiful clarity. Any thoughtful reader will observe that changes in point of view are marked by divisions of chapters and are enforced by carefully planned transitional material. The observant reader will also notice that stream-of-consciousness as a method is used very strictly—it is limited to the person from whose point of view the story is being told, and it contains only fancies, associations, half-formed inquiries—the stuff of legitimate overtones to actual action.

Conclusiveness about the limitations of *The House in Paris* is hazardous. Certainly this is a book about extraordinarily disorientated people; they are alive and convincing but move as if in a daze. They have no active command of passion but are the victims of passion. They have no clear attitudes towards their work, towards society, towards people of another generation. This spiritual daze contributes definite power to a story of people who are victims of passion, but whether it represents a fair and penetrating view of people, I do not know. It may; for since the English people in the rest of this season's novels are also remarkably dazed, Miss Bowen's work is probably only too true to life. There is also a certain brittleness in *The House in Paris* which comes, I believe, from slight overelaborations of essential features: the old woman tends to become only a personification of the power-complex.

The only thing really worth discussing, however, is the vitality which Miss Bowen has brought into a history of involved emotions, both those of children and of fully mature people. But these matters cannot be indicated

effectively here, for they depend on cumulative effect. The reader gradually perceives how things really happen. Perhaps a minor point will serve as an illustration. How is it really to fall asleep in a house in Paris with an old woman dying upstairs?

> The stern dying go on out without looking back; sleepers go out a short way, never not hearing the vibration of Paris, a sea-like stirring, horns, echoes indoors, electric bells making stars in the grey swinging silence that never perfectly settles in volutions of streets and empty courts of stone.

III

The remaining novels may be classified as realistic, with especial stress on particular backgrounds. Many of them are also psychological studies.

Stubborn Roots, by Elma Godchaux, is psychological in that it is the history of a woman who has an unquenchable lust for power. It is regional, for it is interested in a sugar-cane plantation in Louisiana as a specific background. Marie Elizabeth, the wife of a rich sugar-cane planter, spends her life trying to dominate her husband. In her effort to gain power over him she lavishes her physical charm on his assistants. She crushes her children into the shape of her own will, she hounds one negro employee after another away from the house, and she drives an aunt into raving madness. Up to a certain point her husband bends to her will, but she cannot extinguish his one great passion—love of his land. In the end he is drowned in a desperate battle with a flood; and this event is interpreted as a final victory for his wife.

This is a book which raises many questions. There is the question, for instance, of fundamental passions. The man has a passion for his land, and the woman turns with great longing towards cities. Now these emotions, if they are to have any validity, must be particular and peculiar to individual people; surely a farmer in Pennsylvania has a different feeling for land from that of a Louisiana planter. The problem here is related to the popular notion about the American Scene, when, in fact, with any validity there are only a number of regional scenes; Edward J. O'Brien and his followers have been responsible for many a choice fallacy in these matters. It is a

question of abstraction: does *the earth, the city, America*—does any of these words mean anything when it is separated from concrete materials? Miss Godchaux, I think, separates passions too much from people and action. *Stubborn Roots* lacks what one ought to ask first of all of the realistic regional novel—a recording of the concrete manifestations of a particular culture; these manifestations might seem not even to fit together, but even so, such a record would be much more valuable than a presentation of one of the familiar generalizations from the old *Midland Magazine*. Miss Godchaux, however, was probably handicapped in the present book by a thankless psychological theme.

Psychological fiction with its inevitable reliance on stream-of-consciousness seems to have led Miss Godchaux into certain dubious habits of style. She prefers to tell you how her characters feel about things rather than to show them acting out their feelings. Consquently her prose is prickly with short sentences, and her shifts in point of view are bewildering.

> Vivienne watched his hand lying on the table crumbling his bread. She wondered why her mamma treated Father [the parish priest] so much nicer than she treated her papa. Vivienne watched his hand. It seemed to speak to her in a dumb language she understood. She lifted her eyes to his face. She wanted to reach him, touch him.

Now if the last sentence here is to have a real emotional effect on the reader, then the reader must be peculiarly sympathetic with Vivienne; he must be prepared to feel with her, her intimate feelings; he must, in other words, have been following things from her point of view for a definite period of time. Miss Godchaux shifts her point of view so rapidly that the reader is never quite prepared for these emotional whisperings.

Elma Godchaux's conspicuous ability is one for setting down realistic details, both of dialect and scene. Readers of Miss Godchaux's story in the last issue of *The Southern Review* will recall the vividness with which the negro's fearful escape to the river is described—a vividness which makes up for the very doubtful emotionalizing about the river itself. In *Stubborn Roots* there is too much emotional smoke and too little fire; sensationalism about the noises that mares, cows, and bitches make when giving birth to

their young, and not enough direction behind these details. But there is also excellent sharp writing:

> Lightning darted sharply at the windows. Thunder sounded like the firing of guns and rolled away. Vivienne walked out to the gallery. Along the river road close to the levee flambeaux made a space of light, the flames waxing and waning in the wind. Sometimes the wind extinguished a fire and then Vivienne was conscious of the new long hyphen of dark extending between the lights.

This is language which demonstrates beyond any doubt that Elma Godchaux is a writer of unusual powers.

Probably any group of people provides legitimate material for a novel; probably the dullest, meanest, shallowest people can be the makings of a good story. If so, I think the author will see in them more than dullness, meanness, and shallowness; he will find significance in them, and that significance will be the lever with which he will move his story. Unless he is being satiric, he will hardly dwell on meanness for its own sake; to do so would be to push realism beyond the bounds of reason. Karlton Kelm is confronted with these problems in *The Cherry Bed*. His people, Middle-Westerners, are unusually dull, with the exception of a grandmother who in her heroism and homely wisdom resembles the late Will Rogers; they are devoted to family squabbles, gossip, jealousies, specious culture, and petting. Mr. Kelm seems to be really interested in these matters, and apparently was able to see nothing else in his material. For, in order to straighten out the complications in his story, he is reduced to bringing in a man who is totally an outsider, though a member of the family.

It happens that this belated hero is a young writer, and in connection with the treatment of him one can gather some of Mr. Kelm's notions about the art of writing. Mr. Kelm likes fiction that is "written with utter simplicity, . . . without obeisance to fine rhetoric or literary polish"; probably as a result of this ideal Mr. Kelm sprinkles his pages with "on account of she had to" do this or that. Mr. Kelm likes writing which is "a timeless indictment against the selfishness and frailty of the human heart." Perhaps this is the reason for the ceaseless squabbling of his characters; but if so, he seems to have stacked the cards against them. His author-hero has

traveled far, searching for "the meaning of life." He failed to find it because he never found "romance." What he found was not "the meaning of life, just the acceptance of it—an economic problem to study—to think out—a material reason for working to improve the living of lives you find unworthy of being lived." This, whatever it may mean, is the key to the genius of *The Cherry Bed.*

While Mr. Kelm appears to be a fairly conscious champion of the Ma-and-Pa kind of story, Minnie Hite Moody appears to be the unwitting victim of another literary fashion, that of violence for the sake of violence. Mrs. Moody writes, in *Death Is a Little Man,* about Negroes in Georgia. At first these people live, happily and simply, in pastoral calm. Then part of the family moves to the city, and immediately accidents begin happening. As the book progresses, accidents beset not only those who have gone to the city but also those who remained in the country, and not only them, but those as well who have gone out into other parts of the world. The simple fact is that Mrs. Moody depends on accidents to keep her story moving. She refers, as if to justify this procedure, to the Negroes' own fatalistic attitude towards things; the Negroes themselves tacitly expect unlooked-for occurrences. This is hardly a sound justification. For the author does not limit herself to the Negro's point of view; she stands outside and above, and tracing out interchained events, she follows many people. Consequently it is her duty to account for causes as well as effects; she may be a determinist but scarcely a fatalist. Accidents, as Thomas Hardy proves over and again, are tremendously important in the lives of people, but it does not make sense to sprinkle them around like salt on a lamb chop.

And yet some of the characters in *Death Is a Little Man* have an interesting vitality. They are not so interesting as they might be, because the author, rushing headlong from a knife wound to a crushed skull, gives practically no preparation for any event. This is probably an instance in which the influence of writers like William Faulkner and Erskine Caldwell has gone astray. It has gone rather far astray, for however much one may object to the use of comprehensible sensationalism in fiction, this particularly irresponsible, accidental kind of violence seems to have no justification.

I'll Mourn You Later, by Catherine Whitcomb, and *They Seldom Speak,* by Leland Hall are two novels largely about village life in New England. New England, it appears, is not a very healthy environment. People there have striking propensities to insanity, poverty, and mortal illness; but when these are not too pressing they have sex. Miss Whitcomb skips around lightly with human frailty, scarcely touching it, and it, one guesses, scarcely touches her. Mr. Hall lumbers up to frailty and seizes it once and for all in a death grip. The two attacks can be illustrated in connection with sex. The people in this passage from Miss Whitcomb's book are two New Yorkers who have returned to a village. They are married.

> Bill grimaced. "What lousy ideas you have." He leaned over and kissed her, and put his hand on her chest.
>
> "What lovely ideas you have," murmured Henrietta against his mouth. She pulled away. "This is not the time nor the place, however, for lechery." She yawned. "I'm going to take a bath."
>
> He reached for her again. "I wish we were home," he said. "You're always so lovely after your bath. There are nothing but double beds in this house. The Victorians certainly knew how to live." He watched her. "Couldn't we just take a nap or something, hmmmm?"

This is Mr. Hall:

> Mrs. Chatham thought Grace was a good girl, and in many ways she was. She was kindly, obedient, and helpful. . . .
>
> Hardly had she matured when she became a spineless prey to the cravings of her sex. She had got her first experience with one of the fishermen, a man of thirty-five or more, whom she had eyed for a month and finally persuaded to take her across to an island in the river.

There is no context which in any way changes the quality of these two passages. Most readers, I think, will like neither the chatter of *I'll Mourn You Later* nor the bludgeoning of *They Seldom Speak.*

The disintegration of an aristocratic, provincial French family is the subject of Monique Saint-Hélier's *The Abandoned Wood,* but the book

is more than anything else an idiosyncratic study in melancholy and bitterness. Judged from the most liberal of standards, it is fantastic in its disorder; it is stream-of-consciousness running wild, the thoughts of many people forever turning from the sensory aspects of things to St. John's *Revelation,* from sardonic wit to meticulous fancy. Its disorder is inspired, it is extreme romanticism, it wrings the last drop of feeling out of every incident.

> What was she to explain? How could one explain anything when the world had come down about one's shoulders?

Its fantasy is delicate and polished, and set out in beautiful language:

> . . . she would go out driving her whole flock of happy memories before her—memories of her eighteenth year, of her twentieth, of a wide-brimmed hat—all jumping about awkwardly, licking her, nibbling at her, and rubbing their rough little heads against her hips like lambs who hadn't learned how to use their eyes. For her, happiness was like that: white wool, eyes that wandered, and the need to put out her arms.

To *The Abandoned Wood* one can at least concede pleasant passages, and even that very dubious effect known as "atmosphere."

Francis Hackett's novel, *The Green Lion,* provides excellent nourishment for the thoughtful reader. It is a book about Ireland at the close of the past century and the stormy forces which gathered there at that time: the tension occasioned by British Imperialism, the wavering of the Church and then its active betrayal of the Irish, the strength of Parnell leveled by calumny. And these were forces which played furiously upon inherent traits of the Irish, upon their mysticism and enthusiasm, their unruly passion and their weakness for merely petty politics. *The Green Lion* is also a psychological study of the adolescence of a young man. This causes, I believe, a division of interest in the book which Mr. Hackett has probably not succeeded in overcoming; it is true, however, that the adolescent problems of the boy—his struggle, for instance, to reconcile his faith in the Church with his faith in the cause of the patriots—are intimately related to the problems of the Irish as a whole. But, though one can discover

reasons for the novelizing which is done here, still it is a question why this book should be so heavily novelized. Compared with similar parts of Elizabeth Bowen's *House in Paris* or with James Joyce's *Dubliners,* the dialogue given the boy, as well as his observation of events, is stilted and mechanical. Likewise, discussion of politics seems ineffective when it is assigned by main force to a character. But, if the machinery creaks, *The Green Lion* has strength and depth, and it is an important history of a peculiar culture.

The really great book in this shelf of twenty novels is Max René Hesse's *Doctor Morath.* It is a perfect example of objective realism, a powerful record of a culture in a decadent and significant community, an exhaustive account of people who are at once complex and simple. The reader is likely to find himself shaking a little at the sheer reality of the book. It is also somewhat psychological in that it recounts the efforts of a young man, who is awkward in his sensitivity, to adjust his ideals with life as he must live it. But this side of the man is by no means abstracted out from other qualities, and he is a definitely mature though inexperienced man. Again this is a book which is philosophical; without the least strain there come from characters utterances of what unusually intelligent people are really thinking about things: utterances which are remarkable for their clarity and penetration and their dramatic fittingness. There is conflict in opinion; no opinion is made to triumph over the others.

Jakob Morath is a young surgeon who comes to Buenos Aires to begin his career in the hospital of the German Colony. Immediately he finds that he must somehow fit himself into patterns set by the community, specifically that he must learn how to cope with rivalries and jealousies and, for him, a new and oppressively shallow scheme of things. Since he is idealistic, he has to learn more than a new decorum; he must reconcile himself to the morality which lies behind the decorum. The sharp edges of his moral convictions do become smoothed over, but the essential structure of his idealism is never weakened. And this is very good, for his idealism is admirable. The pivot of his philosophy, the root metaphor, can be suggested in his own words, though, of course so brief a statement is unfair to him:

> "If it is impossible to get on in any sphere, whether in science or in ethics, without premises, hypotheses, conventions, why not make do with the convention 'God'? Granted that, your ethic will have a proper foundation, the Indispensable Absolute, in fact."

Thus he is a man who is devoted passionately both to his science and to Saint Augustine. Politically he is socialistic; he never glosses over the flagrant evils of capitalistic imperialism. In fact this book could be considered a concentrated record of those evils; it is a minor irony, apparently, that it was written in Nazi Germany.

Considered as a novel, *Doctor Morath* is conventional. Its power is cumulative; every word—and this is a translation—adds not only to the movement of the story but deepens the portraits and extends the mental and emotional vistas. It is not devoted solely to philosophic people; actually the many simple, passionate people in it are marvelously charming and quite as convincing as the conscientious Jakob Morath himself. The interest in surgery is intense, and the reader soon finds himself sharing in it. As a matter of fact, in spite of the conservative realistic treatment, an intense power runs through the whole of this book. It is as good as the best of Zola. It is comparable with what *The Magic Mountain* would be if some of its special qualities were omitted; it is perhaps the kind of book Thomas Mann would have made of *The Magic Mountain* had he used the methods of *Buddenbrooks*.

CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM

F. Cudworth Flint

THE NAME of Gertrude Stein has long evoked wholehearted emotion of various sorts, even in persons who have read little or nothing of her work. But human nature pays unconscious tribute to sheer durability. Miss Stein is still with us; during the years she has continued "being one who is at one and the same time telling and listening to anything or everything." To be able to do both at once is, by the bye, her definition of a genius. As the number of those who have had the rôle merely of listening to Miss Stein has grown, the earlier simpler responses to her work have been modified by curiosity. An effect sustained for so long must have notable causes; what *is* Miss Stein about? To satisfy this curiosity Miss Stein visited America in 1934-1935, delivering lectures on her literary methods and aims. One of these lectures—"Poetry and Grammar," included in her book *Lectures in America*—was delivered at the University of Chicago in November, 1934. At the invitation of the University, she returned in March, 1935, to give four lectures on narration, setting forth "all I know just at

Narration, by Gertrude Stein (Introduction by Thornton Wilder). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. $2.50. *This Modern Poetry,* by Babette Deutsch. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. $2.75. *The Arts Today,* edited by Geoffrey Grigson. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head. 8/6. *The Achievement of T. S. Eliot,* by F. O. Matthiessen. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. $2.25. *The Double Agent,* by R. P. Blackmur. New York: Arrow Editions. $3.00. *Reactionary Essays,* by Allen Tate. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

present about how writing is written how an audience is existing how anyone telling anything is telling that thing." In his introduction Mr. Wilder attributes to these lectures three conspicuous merits: the lectures are "models of artistic form," they are "object-lessons of the teaching method," and they are notable for "the richness and vitality of the ideas contained in them." Their artistic form "reposes upon an unerring ear for musical cadence, . . . upon a conviction that repetition is a form of insistence and emphasis that is characteristic of all life," and upon an "economy of the punctuation, which has been explained by Miss Stein as being a form of challenge to a livelier collaboration on the part of the reader." They exhibit pedagogic virtue because they progress from simple to complex matters, and because "these lectures first prepare and provoke the correct questions in the listeners' minds." Then, too, "there is an almost terrifying exactness in Miss Stein's use of the very words that the rest of the world employs so loosely": for example, *anybody, anything,* and *any way,* in her fundamental definition in these lectures: "Narration is what anybody has to say in any way about anything that can happen, that has happened or will happen in any way." And, elaborating his praise of the content of the lectures, he writes:

> We hear nothing of the proportion of exposition to narrative, of where to place a climax, of how to heighten vividness through the use of illustrative detail. Here we return to first principles . . . Consequently, the discussion leads at once into the realms of psychology, philosophy, and metaphysics, to a theory of knowledge and a theory of time . . . treated, however . . . in the homely language of colloquial usage . . . The outstanding passages will undoubtedly be those dealing with the psychology of the creative act as the moment of "recognition" and the discussion of the relations between the artist and the audience.

So much by way of eulogy for the author of *Tender Buttons* from the author of *The Woman of Andros.*

Nothing that has been quoted from Mr. Wilder is precisely untrue; yet he defines only half of the curiously mixed impression produced by these lectures. To take up his last point first: the matters treated in them are undoubtedly important, and Miss Stein shows herself here, as else-

where in her critical writings, to be shrewd, and lacking neither in a sense of irony nor of humor. Moreover, her incidental comments on the general effects produced by words in successive periods of English literature—a topic treated more at length in *Lectures in America*—exemplify her possibly unique sense for an aspect of language only to be adumbrated by some such phrase as "the movement of words." The meanings of words—or perhaps their sounds as conveyors of meanings, rather than these sounds as mere phonetic phenomena—seem to register themselves in her consciousness as diagrams of movement or of position. In like manner, she responds to varieties of syntactical organization as if these were varieties of visual design. Hence she is able to convey in novel terms a vivid sense of the behavior of words aligned in written groups. No other writer of whom I know, has made the distinction between the quality of words in Elizabethan times and their quality in the eighteenth century so evident and even, like the vibrations of deep sounds, *tactile,* as she has done in her *Lectures in America.* In *Narration,* she employs this gift in discussing the differences of movement between English literature and American literature; she lays great stress on the legato realization of completeness in English style as contrasted with the American staccato movement toward undefined goals. But against such insights must be set the stultifying effect of one of her constant preoccupations—her attempt to *arrest* time in language, her attempt to force a temporal art to produce the effects proper to a spatial art. "We really now do not really know that anything is progressively happening and as knowledge is what you know and as now we do not know that anything is progressively happening where are we then in narrative writing . . ." "A great deal perhaps all of my writing of the Making of Americans was an effort to escape from inevitably feeling that anything that everything had meaning as beginning and middle and ending." Naturally, this doctrine does not manifest its consequences in a critical work like *Narration,* save as it links up with her insistence that reiteration does not involve repetition, but is a mode of emphasis and a manifestation of variety beneath uniformity. But when one turns to *The Making of Americans*—particularly in its earlier unabridged form—it is almost impossible to concentrate one's attention upon the text for any considerable time, and

the results are scanty, in view of the effort expended, should one succeed in doing so.

One wonders why Miss Stein has embarked on this unpromising endeavor. She has stated (in *Lectures in America)* that she has lost all interest in music, and she does not discuss the dance—which two arts, together with literature, are the arts in and of time. On the other hand, she has long professed to be a connoisseur of painting—an art in space. But these facts by themselves do not explain the extent to which she tries to render as simultaneous the necessarily successive parts of a literary composition. She grounds her practice on her observations in psychology: "How do you know anything, well you know anything as complete knowledge as having it completely in you at the actual moment that you have it. That is what knowledge is, and essentially therefore knowledge is not succession but an immediate existing." To what degree the knowledge one has can simultaneously be present to, or a determinant of, the structure of consciousness, is a question beyond my technical competence. No doubt there is an important sense in which a literary work, when the reader has finished his reading of it, creates in the reader's mind a structure representative of itself, which can be more or less present as a whole to consciousness. But no such completed structure is present *while* the work is being read. Miss Stein's mistake in her theory is to imply the contrary; and her mistake in practice—in some of her narrative works—is to attempt to write as if the whole work were *at each point* in the work completely present. One is driven to the conclusion that such an endeavor, in a person of Miss Stein's evident superiority of endowment and training, can proceed only from a sensibility fundamentally eccentric. By this I imply no absolute judgment on the value of her way of experience; I merely state that, to be assimilable, much of her creative practice requires, and from her disciples has received, dilution and modification.

On other matters treated in these lectures—the distinction between prose and poetry, the relation between narrative in newspapers, in history, and in fiction, and the effect of various kinds of audiences upon various kinds of writing, she has much to say that is valuable and often at the same time amusing. Her pedagogic merits may stand as noted as Mr. Wilder. As for the vexed question of her style, one may say in brief: first,

that her lectures represent a mitigation of her creative practice—it is, for example, perfectly easy to understand what she states she intends to do in writing one of her "portraits," even though the portrait itself resists penetration even by Miss Stein's own analysis; and second, that much of her repetition and her incomplete syntax cease to distract the reader, and even come to justify themselves, when the reader perceives, as he is bound to do, that these proceed *in her lectures* (I am not here commenting on her repetitive practice elsewhere) from her reproduction in her written style of the cadences and idiosyncracies of her spoken style. One who has never heard Miss Stein lecture can gain from the written text a fair idea of how she would sound. Moreover, once the reader gets into the way of hearing what he reads, her omission of most punctuation will cease to distract him, for the cadences will furnish their own punctuation. Of course, the further question arises: granted that in these lectures the reader may hear the writer, how about the merits of Miss Stein's style as spoken? To this question, I can return only an answer which may seem too much like the conclusion of the second lecture:

> . . . We will come to say, perhaps yes, perhaps no, no and yes are still nice words, yes I guess I still will believe that I will.
>
> You will perhaps say no and yes perhaps yes.

In other words, some of her repetition for emphasis justifies itself. And her casting her remarks throughout in a simple language, avoiding most technical terms even in dealing with technical matters—of psychology and philosophy, as well as of literary technique—has, notwithstanding the circumlocution involved, the merit of forcing one to consider afresh some problem which has become stale by the familiarity of the technical language currently used in its statement and solution. On the other hand, Miss Stein, though she often arrives suddenly at a new point, invariably lingers at that point just too long, and often even goes back for a new start toward the same point. The cumulative effect of all these phenomena is to produce in a reader, and, I must believe, in a hearer, after considerable immersion in her discourse, a feeling of somewhat amused, somewhat enlightened *stupefaction*. One's mind has traveled, but at a retarded pace not one's own—a pace not usual for intelligent minds. In spite of the expertness of Miss Stein in analyzing literary movement, one feels cramped

for movement. One must regard Miss Stein as something of a sorceress—a frank sorceress, eminently agreeable to expounding, to the profit of her audience, the secrets of her sorcery; but in the long run, a person from whom one must escape. I shall perhaps say no and yes perhaps no.

The next three books on our list may be passed over briefly. Miss Deutsch's *This Modern Poetry* has a function solely propaedeutic. For the inquiring reader anxious to "take up" contemporary British and American poetry, she furnishes a conspectus of the "field," and a summary of the more conspicuous talents. After sketching in the "backgrounds" with particular mention of Poe, Whitman, and Emily Dickinson, she plunges into the contemporary scene, with Hardy and Gerard Manley Hopkins as her earlier limit, and Kenneth Fearing and Anno Domini 1935 for her terminus. On certain inequities in apportioning space, representing failures in judgment of particular authors, we need not linger. (There is, for example, far too little space devoted to Wallace Stevens and to Marianne Moore.) But two more general grounds for censure must be noticed.

First, the quotations from authors discussed are insufficient in number or length to make Miss Deutsch's descriptions real and significant for her readers. Second, and more important, her comments on most of the poets considered are *commonplace*. And in criticism of a poet, commonplaceness leads away from, rather than toward, the truth. For example, she remarks in passing that Eliot exhibits a "nostalgia for the withered glories of the past." Frost is "the gentle poet of New England." "Hart Crane found in the Brooklyn Bridge a symbol adequate to his purpose"—though here we perhaps find, not commonplaceness itself, but utter falsity of statement reached *through* a commonplace attitude to a poem. Akin to Miss Deutsch's failures of perception, are her failures of expression. She often writes without realizing to herself what she is saying. Mrs. Wylie's verse, she states, is "orbed and pointed"—a mixed image which yields less, the longer it is contemplated. Similar failures in realization account for Miss Deutsch's occasional use of Wardour Street English—"Emily Dickinson reding the riddle of identity"; for occasional miscellaneous affectations—"a narrative poem abounding in brutality, and withal emulous of tenderness and exaltation"; and for that vice which one had supposed peculiar, happily, to college professors of literature—the vice of cheapen-

ing deservedly famous phrases of poetry by echoing them at moments when the emotional level of prose discourse degrades them into useless frippery: "And when she finds it ["the key to a fabulous past"], the gardens unlocked by her verse seem the haunt of one who on honey-dew has fed and drunk the milk of Paradise." In fairness to Miss Deutsch it must be said that these passages show her at her worst. She usually writes better than this. And in favor of her book one can say that to marshal the poets into classes, as she has done, is a kind of service. The seats may not exactly fit the occupants, and the school uniforms handed out by the mistress conceal much of the individuality of the wearers; but it is an advantage to the hasty visitor—the reader—to have the poets confronting him in orderly rows. He may gain a clearer impression of at least some of them than he would if they were all running around loose, muddying one another's faces in the gutter. Miss Deutsch has the merit, as well as the chief fault, of an educational institution.

Periodically, intelligent and dissatisfied young men issue symposia in which they survey, often with more than a tincture of jubilant pessimism, the state of the arts today. Luckily, of the essays collected by Mr. Grigson, only one—Mr. Humphrey Jennings', on "The Theatre"—is merely flippant. The combination of the name of W. H. Auden and his topic "Psychology and Art" naturally first attracts an American reader; but his essay is disappointing, though provocative. Though he limits psychology to Freudian psychoanalysis, he then reëxpands his topic to more than its original dimensions by remarking of Freud that "He is the most typical but not the only representative of a certain attitude to life and living relationships, and to define that attitude and its importance to creative art must be the purpose of this essay." For the ensuing attempt to summarize the elements, material and spiritual, in the contrasted stages of all historic civilization, and at the same time to indicate the bearing of Freudian teaching upon art, the artist, and their relations to life, twenty pages are much too few. The essay falls asunder into miscellaneous fragments. Mr. Louis MacNeice, himself a young poet of distinction, writing on "Poetry" fares better, even though in his particular illustrations, he exhibits symptoms of hasty reading. For example, to prove that Eliot is romantic, he points to the similarity in mood between

I should have been a pair of ragged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

and

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!—

quite overlooking the fact that Eliot usually conceives his material dramatically. The earlier lines are spoken by Prufrock, not by the poet as a private individual. But such flaws are outweighed by the penetration of MacNeice's comments on his own generation, such as Auden, Spender, and Day Lewis, and by the freshness and soundness of his general observations on poetry, such as that poetry is neither exclusively this nor exclusively that, but a *ratio*. Mr. Arthur Calder-Marshall tries to cover British, American, and German fiction, and at the same time to sketch the contemporary economic and social scene. As a result he wanders, strewing sometimes inept dogmatisms along his path. In particular, because the scene of Huxley's *Brave New World* is laid in the future, the book represents an *escape* from facing our situation in the present! Whereas even he who runs while he reads, should have grasped the fact that the book is a *criticism* of certain features of the present, by showing in fuller development the tendencies which have produced those features. What can Mr. Calder-Marshall have been doing while *he* read the book? Mr. Edward Crankshaw, on "Music," occupies himself entirely with two matters: first, with the assertion that valid new forms arise not as the result of a striving for newness of form in itself, but in response to demands dictated by new material—which is perfectly true; and second, with a denunciation, several times rehearsed, of both the theory and the compositions of Schönberg. Mr. Crankshaw does assert that Schönberg is valuable as a destructive force; but since we are not told in what documents or compositions this beneficial influence is recorded, we are left wondering whether this tribute is more than a mere concession to what "they say." The four most successful of these essays are Mr. MacNeice's, already noticed, and those of Mr. Geoffrey Grigson on "Painting and Sculpture," of Mr. John Grierson on "The Cinema," and of Mr. John Summerson on "Architecture." That is to say, these four essays best perform what can at most be performed within narrow limitations of space. They give us a thread of crisply stated generalization about the contemporary arts, which the reader may use as a clue to guide him through

this unfamiliar territory, even though on better acquaintance with it, he may prefer other guidance. And these essays likewise furnish a moderate amount of information—names, dates, obvious features of technique—so disposed as to show its relation to the generalizations advanced. The prime virtue of such essays is to preserve a just ratio between fact and interpretation of fact. This feat these four essays accomplish.

After reading Professor Matthiessen's *The Achievement of T. S. Eliot,* one must wonder why the book was written. The first sentence of the preface states that "My one aim in this essay is to evaluate Eliot's method and achievement as an artist, and in so doing to emphasize certain of the fundamental elements in the nature of poetry which are in danger of being obscured by the increasing tendency to treat poetry as a social document and to forget that it is an art." There would be good excuse for a book which carried out these intentions in a spirit of critical independence; the trouble with Mr. Matthiessen's book is that his evaluation of Eliot's "method and technique" and his emphasis on "certain of the fundamental elements in the nature of poetry" consist almost entirely in the citation and expansion of passages from Eliot's own essays. Eliot, and not Matthiessen, becomes the judge. So if one has read, or intends to read, Eliot, why read Matthiessen? It is true, there is a certain amount of underived polemic directed against those who believe that Eliot's poetical practice contradicts his critical theories, and against those who assert that Eliot's conversion to Anglo-Catholicism represents a retreat from personal integrity. Mr. Matthiessen's arguments might benefit certain persons who are unlikely to read his book. There is, too, a pedagogic advantage in having Eliot's statements of doctrine, with illustrations from his practice, grouped around certain focal points, represented by the chapter-headings of this book: "Tradition and the Individual Talent," "The Problem for the Contemporary Artist," "The Objective Correlative," "The Auditory Imagination," "The Integrity of a Work of Art," and "The Sense of his Own Age." But so much might have been done in a purely expository essay of thirty pages. An entire book which professes to be critical, should be much more than an arrangement, however neat, of echoes. Even Mr. Matthiessen's turns of phrase betray his dependence: "Eliot is not making mere literary allusions. . . . *Each* of these references brings with it

the *full* impact of its special context [*Italics mine*]." Moreover, his style is modelled, no doubt unconsciously, on a wholehearted reverence for the way the thing has usually been phrased. This is evident upon a comparison of the contributions of Matthiessen and Hulme to the following passage from page 15: "It is always one of the prime functions of poetry to break through our conventional perceptions, to startle us into seeing the world through fresh eyes, into a new awareness of reality. As Hulme observes, 'poetry always endeavors to arrest you and to make you continuously see a physical thing, to prevent your gliding through an abstract process.' " Both writers operate here on the same emotional level; but Hulme's phrasing is more integrated, more precise. Matthiessen's style presents a combination of impeccable syntax and undistinguised diction; in short, the result is second-hand. A curious incidental achievement of his style is, that the passage (see page 107) in which Eliot's discussion of tragedy is rephrased, sounds as if it had been written by Bertrand Russell in the style of his "A Free Man's Worship." Consequently, distinctions Eliot has been at some pains to build up, deliquesce into what he must regard as facile heresies. Can Mr. Eliot have been wholly pleased with Professor Matthiessen's certainly well-meant tribute?

The two most important, because most illuminating, books on our list are Mr. R. P. Blackmur's collection of essays, *The Double Agent*, and Mr. Allen Tate's *Reactionary Essays*.

The point of view and the method of approach of the one writer contrast with those of the other. Mr. Blackmur's point of view is sceptical, provisional, self-analytical. His method of approach, he has stated clearly in his concluding essay, "A Critic's Job of Work":

> My own approach . . . is . . . primarily through the technique, in the widest sense of that word, of the examples handled; technique on the plane of words and even of linguistics in Mr. [I. A.] Richards' sense, but also technique on the plane of intellectual and emotional patterns in Mr. [Kenneth] Burke's sense, and technique, too, in that there is a technique of securing and arranging and representing a fundamental view of life. The advantage of the technical approach is I think double. It readily admits other approaches and is anxious to be complemented by them. The second advantage . . . is a conse-

quence of the first; it treats of nothing in literature except in its capacity of reduction to literary fact, which is where it resembles scholarship, only passing beyond it in that its facts are usually further into the heart of the literature than the facts of most scholarship . . .

But facts are not simple or easy to come at; not all the facts will appear to one mind, and the same facts appear differently in the light of different minds, . . . In short, for the arts, *mere* technical scrutiny of any order is not enough without the direct apprehension—which may come first or last—to which all scrutinies which show facts contribute.

It may be that there are principles that cover both the direct apprehension and the labour of providing modes for the understanding of the expressive arts. If so, they are Socratic, and found within, and subject to the fundamental scepticism as in Montaigne.

By contrast, Mr. Tate's point of view as a critic may be inferred from the following excerpts from his remarks on Emily Dickinson, in his essay "Four American Poets," even though the quotation deals with the poet rather than with the critic, and Mr. Tate's critical method of approach is likewise indicated:

Personal revelation . . . is a feature of all great poetry: it is probably the hidden motive for writing. It is the effort of the individual to live apart from a cultural tradition that no longer sustains him. But this culture . . . is indispensable: there is a great deal of shallow nonsense in modern criticism which holds that poetry—and this is a half-truth that is worse than false—is essentially revolutionary. It is only indirectly revolutionary: the intellectual and religious background of an age no longer contains the whole spirit, and the poet proceeds to examine that background in terms of immediate experience. But the background is absolutely necessary; otherwise all the arts, not only poetry, would have to rise in a vacuum. Poetry does not dispense with tradition; it probes the deficiencies of a tradition . . .

A culture cannot be consciously created. It is an available source of ideas that are imbedded in a complete and homogeneous society.

> The poet finds himself balanced upon the moment when such a world is about to fall, when it threatens to run into looser and less self-sufficient impulses. This world order is assimilated . . . to the poetic vision; it is brought down from abstraction to personal feeling.
>
> Now in this connection it may be said that the prior conditions for great poetry, given a great talent, are just two: the thoroughness of the poet's discipline in an objective system of truth, and his lack of consciousness of such a discipline. For this discipline is a number of fundamental ideas the origin of which the poet does not know; they give form and stability to his fresh perceptions of the world; and he cannot shake them off.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that Mr. Tate's point of view rejects the sceptical temperament as a desideratum for the critic, and, though flexible, involves the search for a religion—or at least a philosophy—relatively permanent, at least so far as to furnish the critic with points of reference which shall remain stable for his own generation. And Mr. Tate's method of critical approach (more plainly indicated by certain references to Shakespeare, Donne, and Emily Dickinson, excised from the passage as reproduced) is *through* a background of the history of ideas and of modes of feeling, *to* the character—intellectual and moral—of the writer as revealed in the writer's works.

It is at first sight surprising that, with points of view and methods of approach so diverse and even opposite, Blackmur and Tate reach so nearly unanimous a judgment on those authors on whom both have written. Both grant high praise to Eliot, though Tate's religious temper and social views are much closer to Eliot's—however much they may differ—than are Blackmur's. Both regard Hart Crane as a magnificent failure, particularly in *The Bridge,* and for similar reasons: Tate thinks Crane was misled by his Whitmanian-Romantic attempt to impose his individual will on experience intractable to such an imposition; and Blackmur suggests that Crane's true bent lay towards Baudelaire, but that Crane so misunderstood himself that he attempted to write *The Bridge* as if he had the sensibility typical of Whitman. This similarity in judgment, proceeding from two so different approaches, demonstrates afresh that in criticism, the ***prime*** essential is not the point of view or method, but the possession by

the critic himself of sensibility, balance, and experience; and, moreover, that these qualities will be given adequate expression through any point of view or method of approach as comprehensive as the material to be dealt with. The constricting effect of a purely Marxian analysis of literature, conspicuously evident in the recent writings of Granville Hicks—as Blackmur, himself sympathetic to socialistic views in economics, notes—arises from the fact that Marxism, as a literary point of view, is beyond comparison narrower than the material—literature of all kinds—which it judges.

Blackmur's and Tate's points of view and methods *are* competent to solve the problems to which they are applied. Where there is a difference in their conclusions, as in the higher praise accorded Pound's *A Draft of Thirty Cantos* by Tate, Blackmur's opinion is the more immediately persuasive, because his analytic method enables the reader to see in detail how the judgment has been arrived at. It should be highly salutary for all of us—prone as we are to substitute lazy impressionism for criticism—to watch Mr. Blackmur convict E. E. Cummings, from Cummings' own words, of vagueness of imagery and an abstraction of concreteness and life from his vocabulary; or to follow him while he deftly expounds the varied means by which Wallace Stevens "has turned his words into knowledge"—that is, by his exact appreciation of the whole content and quality of words, has erected from them solid structures, tenable by the imaginations of his readers; or to search out with Blackmur the technical bases for the elusive art of Marianne Moore—an art so frail in appearance, yet in reality solid, compact, and self-contained. In contrast to Blackmur's series of microscopic views, Tate's essays resemble panoramas; some of the titles, indeed—"Humanism and Naturalism," "The Profession of Letters in the South," "Religion in the Old South," and "Three Types of Poetry"—indicate as much. These essays of wider scope justify themselves by establishing fresh patterns of intellectual order, in the form of important sequences and parallelisms among authors and between literary periods. It is this effect which gives unity to the at first sight somewhat miscellaneous topics discussed by Tate, ranging from Elizabethan satire to Edna St. Vincent Millay. The pattern suggested in "Three Types of Poetry" is particularly interesting. The first type, comprising all primar-

ily allegorical and didactic poetry, of whatever period, and the second type, "Romantic" poetry, whenever written, are both regarded as expressions of the practical will; and so are in contrast to the third or "creative" type of poetry, exemplified by Dante (whose allegory is regarded as secondary)—a type of poetry which arises from and evokes the faculty proper to art—the contemplative imagination.

Incidentally, the title of Mr. Tate's book—*Reactionary Essays*—may suggest patterns of a kind *not* to be found in his pages. I cannot regard as reactionary—at least, in any pejorative sense—his reiterated doctrines, first, that human nature being permanently imperfect, no schemes of social amelioration will *by themselves* remove all human ills, or solve the "problem" of evil; and, second, that art, being a product of the activity of the imagination, is not to be valued primarily for its practical effects of whatever sort. These doctrines are reactionary only in the sense that they react from contrary beliefs at present widely held, implicitly or explicitly. If there is a basis for Mr. Tate's title other than his adherence to these two beliefs, and possibly his desire for the reinstitution of religious standards, albeit of some as yet unspecified stamp, this further basis has eluded me.

I come lastly, not by way of emphasis, but simply because I have not got around to it earlier, to the flaws in these two books. Mr. Blackmur's conspicuous fault is stylistic. Although an excellent critic, he is, as a mere and sheer writer of exposition, needlessly awkward and needlessly obscure. Granted that he is dealing with subtle and difficult matters, nevertheless the trouble seems not to lie there. When one can gather what he is trying to say, one can usually grasp the point at issue. Yet many passages require two or three readings before they are comprehended, and when comprehended, seem to have been needlessly difficult. This difficulty and this awkwardness arise from one or more of sundry causes, now one and now another coming to the fore. There are sheer mistakes (or perhaps "useless unorthodoxies" would be more accurate) in grammar. There is a frequent failure to assign to a pronoun which for the time being is the carrier of some important idea, an unmistakable antecedent; a species of this fault is the reference of a pronoun to a following noun, in places where a preceding noun may easily be mistaken for the antecedent. Abstract words

when incidental rather than central to the discussion are used so loosely, or so vaguely, as to make of some passages insoluble puzzles: "It is an amusing exercise—as it refreshes the terms of bewilderment and provides a common clue to the secrets of all the modes of thinking—to restore the insights of Freud and Fascism and Marxism to the terms of the Church . . ." What are *terms* of bewilderment? "Terms of the Church" suggests that "the vocabulary" or "the ideology" of bewilderment is meant. But *has* bewilderment any vocabulary or ideology? And if so, why should either be refreshed? What are the "secrets" of "all modes of thinking?" If taken in its widest possible denotation, Mr. Blackmur's statement seems to say that a translation of problems into the language of the Church will explain all mysteries of psychology and logic, and perhaps of epistemology as well. If this be true, let us by all means translate, without a moment's delay! Finally, Blackmur fails to make the structure of his ideas in a given essay stand out clearly in memory; the reader must often reread an essay if he would separate the main points from subsidiary ones. This failure arises from lack of a sense for the organization of the paragraph. Through repetition of key words and phrases, and through the use of connective words, the sentences in a paragraph can be made to converge towards a given focal statement more than Blackmur's practice suggests. I suspect—though this is a shot in the dark—that, at least during some especially formative period in Mr. Blackmur's education, his reading in knotty, or complicated, or otherwise difficult styles, greatly exceeded the usual proportion of such reading to one's own practice in simple forms of writing. If so, this would be an example of the training of the perceptive powers of a critic being an impediment to the training of his powers of expression. For the good of his written style, Mr. Blackmur should take a holiday from Ezra Pound, and read, say, Swift, *passim*. Or almost any educational manual on any topic written in French might do.

The flaw in Mr. Tate's essays is of a quite different sort. Unlike Blackmur's style, Tate's is singularly perspicuous. Indeed, for the writing of criticism his style surpasses in unobtrusive ease and clarity that of any other writer discussed in this article. The flaw in his book is incompletion of substance. He has formulated, particularly in the essays "Humanism and Naturalism" and "Religion in the Old South," what appears to be a

metaphysic arising from his own experience (in which, of course, as in all experience, traditions of many sorts play a large part). This metaphysic is used as a supporting and interpretative background in his discussion and evaluation both of intellectual tendencies in history, and of particular writers. But it is easier to follow Mr. Tate when he is focussing his attention upon a specific critical problem, than when he is appealing to his metaphysical scheme of reference. For this scheme has not yet attained consistency of statement. Very possibly, the scheme itself is developing, and various essays in this collection may represent, according to their several dates, successive stages in Mr. Tate's doctrine. Yet any such supposition on the reader's part is a hypothesis which accounts for the existence of, but does not resolve, certain difficulties.

For example, Tate declares that pure Quality is pure Evil—meaning, I infer, that a *complete immersion* in the quality of whatever one is observing, would occasion the disintegration of the observer. But if this is true, is not what Tate calls "creative" poetry—which he ranks higer than other poetry—an invitation to the powers of Evil? For he insists that, in contradistinction to the quantification and partition of experience performed by science, and in general, by all practical activities, "creative" poetry confronts the imagination with the quality of the whole experience embodied in the poem. Perhaps the formal structure of art is the barrier which prevents the quality mediated by art from being "pure" enough to engulf us; but the point at any rate calls for explication. Again, Tate declares that all quantifying activities falsify history by making it seem a logical series, and therefore reversible. By religion, however, the unique and irreversible characteristic of the temporal series which constitutes history, is preserved. Religion, therefore, is a *truer* interpreter of the continuity of human experience than is science. But would this defense of religion satisfy the believer in any particular religion? For religions (as distinguished from systems of social ethics such as Confucianism) regard themselves as *bridges* thrown across from the Infinite to the Finite, from the Eternal to the Temporal. A given religion appeals to certain events in the past to demonstrate its foundation—that a bridge has been thrown across. But no religion regards future events as able to destroy the bridge; that is to say, no religion contemplates the possibility of its own destruction. The Word of God, once spoken

in the series of time, reëchoes throughout that series so long as the series shall last. But Mr. Tate's analysis of time suggests no such permanence for a religion. His statement of the nature of history confers an equal reality upon all the moments of history, at the time when each moment is a present; and the past, though still real, can have the reality only of *pastness*. So much, I suppose, must be implicit in the irreversibility of the temporal series. Now, in every moment of history, not only are certain elements of experience coming into being within the temporal series, but certain other elements are fading away from incarnation therein. It is matter of recorded fact that many religions have perished; and the tone of Mr. Tate's references to Christianity implies that he believes—with whatever regret—that it will suffer the same fate. Nor does he seem to attribute permanence to any other existing or any possible future religion. And there are indeed good grounds for supposing, aside from belief in a *particular* religion, that whatwhatever time has given, time may take away. These annihilations are, by Tate's own analysis, as much part of the quality—of the religious reality —of history, as the emergences into being. Time, therefore, is stealing from every present religion its reality as a "present-ness," and is removing the real "past-ness" of former religions ever nearer to inaccessibility—at least, for *us*. It is true that, in a sense, the pagan mythology of the Greeks survives in present experience—but not as a present religion. It survives as a referential and integrative background for metaphorical thinking. Can more, according to Tate, be promised to any religion? And can any religion be believed in, which admits the possibility for itself of such a fate? At present, Mr. Tate's metaphysic seems at least possibly to render suspect a devotion to art; and he seems, while insisting upon the truth of the religious point of view, to deny us the possibility of a religion. It is much to be desired that he should expound his views at greater length, and with a view to resolving questions such as those noted here.

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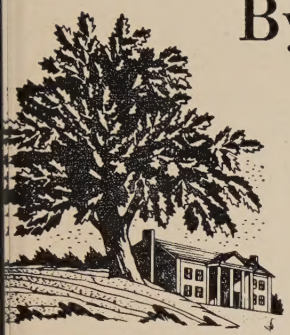

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